

A
SERMON, &c.
AT THE
ORDINATION
OF THE
Rev. Mr *WINTER*.

SEARMON, &c.

ORDINATION



Rev. Mr. WINTER.

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A
S E R M O N

PREACHED at the
ORDINATION

Of the REVEREND
Mr *RICHARD WINTER*,
JUNE 14, 1759.

At *New-Court*, near *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields*,

By JOHN OLDING.

Together with an
INTRODUCTORY DISCOURSE,
By THOMAS HALL.

Mr WINTER's Confession of FAITH.

A DISCOURSE upon IMPOSITION
of HANDS,

By THOMAS BRADBURY.

And the EXHORTATION,

By JOHN CONDER

Published by Request.

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Together with an

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T H E
INTRODUCTION, &c.

*A serious and due Attention to the Holy Solemnity
we are now to engage in may justly bring to
our Remembrance that Passage of our LORD
to his Disciples, recorded*

LUKE X. 23.

*Blessed are the Eyes which see the
Things that ye see.*

BLESSED indeed are the People
who have a right View and
clear Understanding of the great
Things which are this Day to
be seen and heard in this Af-
sembly: For though there be nothing of
outward Pomp or Grandeur to strike the
Eye of the Body, yet there is, in the Tranfac-
tions of this Day, such a Display of the Di-
vine Glory as will engage every true Chris-
tian

tian to acknowledge, that it is an unspeakable Privilege, and a real Blessedness for any *to behold by Faith* the Things that are now to be set forth among us. This, I humbly conceive, will be evident from a just, though but a brief Explication of the Facts and visible Parts of the Work that now lies before us.

WHAT this is, I presume, none in this Assembly can need that I should inform them: For doubtless you all know, that it is what is generally and fitly called the *Public Ordination of a Minister* of the Gospel, or the open Declaration and Recognizing of what has been done by this Church, in order to the setting apart to the Pastoral Office that Servant of the LORD †, whom they have religiously and unanimously chosen to be joined with their very aged and venerable Pastor *, to be with Him an Overseer, Ruler and Guide in their spiritual Concerns, or to be the Bishop of their Souls under CHRIST the supreme LORD and Bishop of all His People.

AND by the Work of this Day we are instructed in the infinite Wisdom and Power, in the boundless Mercy and Grace, in the wonderful Tenderness and Compassion of our GOD, exercised and exerted through the Mediation of CHRIST towards apostate Creatures, fallen into a State of Sin, and conse-

† The Reverend Mr *Richard Winter*.

* The Reverend Mr *Bradbury*.

quently obnoxious to the most dreadful State of endless Misery and Destruction.

YEA, in the Work of this Day we have a most delightful and assuring Evidence that there is in CHRIST a compleat Redemption, every way commensurate to the Ruin of the Fall; and perfectly adequate to the utmost Difficulty and Exigency of the Case of any Man upon Earth that desires Salvation, though he has been the very chief of Sinners.

BLESSED then are the Eyes of those who rightly see, that is, of those who through the heavenly *Unction*, *which they have received from the Holy One*, do in a believing and experimental Manner see and know the great Things that are now to be declared and spoken of, as indubitable Verities, which can be no Lie, because they are taught us in that unerring Word of supernatural Revelation which came from Him who is Truth itself.

To enlarge and confirm your Apprehensions of the Blessedness of such Believers, I shall briefly attempt to shew under several Heads what are the Things which are now to be seen, being taught in the Word of God: And as I proceed I shall endeavour, through Divine Assistance, to point out under each particular Head somewhat of the Evidence thereof given us in the special Work of this Day.

As to the Things which are to be seen or learnt from the present solemn Business, I shall mention the following grand and important Articles:

We here see—That the promised Messiah became incarnate—That this incarnate Messiah has fulfilled all Righteousness—That hereby He has made Peace with God for Sinners—That he has thus procured Health and Cure for their Souls—That Satan is dethroned—That there is a full Provision made for the Supply of all a Believer's Wants—and, lastly, That there is a Way settled and revealed by God, through which the vilest of Sinners may be recovered and become Partakers of this glorious Provision.

1. We here see that *the promised Messiah became incarnate*, or that JESUS CHRIST is come in the Flesh. *For the WORD was made Flesh and dwelt among us.*

BUT here it may be enquired, What is there in the Work of this Day to be an Evidence and Proof of this Point? In answer to this, Let it be considered, that we have now a fresh Instance of CHRIST'S giving Pastors and Teachers for the Work of the Ministry, for the edifying of his Body, the Church: And the Bestowment of this Gift being a Fruit of his Ascension, it may well be esteemed a Proof of his *having ascended*;

and what is this, as the Apostle teaches us to argue, but that *He also descended first.*

So that we have here a plain and full Discovery of CHRIST's Incarnation, and such a clear, perspicuous and advantageous View thereof, as neither any of the *Prophets*, nor of the *Kings of Israel* that lived before our Saviour either had or could have, how much soever they desired it. This Remark was made by our LORD himself to his Disciples, *ver. 24.*

AND this is one of those great Things, the intellectual and believing View whereof is attended with a Blessedness, that cannot be enjoyed by those in Pagan Countries, who never hear the Gospel's joyful Sound. And since we are herein distinguished from them, and favoured with an Assurance that CHRIST is come in the Flesh, how thankful should we be daily for this unspeakable Gift, and how careful to receive, rest and rely upon Him and Him alone for Salvation. For otherwise we must know, it will be more tolerable for the very Heathens themselves than it will be for any of us in the Day of Judgment.

2. WE are here shewn, that the incarnate MESSIAH *has fulfilled all Righteousness.* By his Obedience unto Death he finished the Work which his Father gave him to do. CHRIST's Exaltation is the Reward of his Obedience,
and

and shews that his Obedience was absolutely perfect and infinitely meritorious. It was a Blessedness to the Disciples that they saw the Messiah going up and down doing Good, and making it his Meat and Drink to do the Will of him that sent him : And blessed sure must now be the Eyes of his People, for they see that his Work is *compleatly finished*, that He has wrought out, and brought in an everlasting Righteousness, whereby He has obtained an eternal Redemption for all his Church and People.

BUT wherein does the present Work give a Manifestation of this perfect Righteousness? I answer, We have here a Proof, that the Righteousness of CHRIST has purchased and secured the Privilege and Grace of a Gospel-Ministry. But this it could not have done, if it had not purchased a Redemption from every Curse of the broken Law ; and from the same Grace and Redemption from which a Gospel-Church receives *a Pastor according to the Heart of God*, shall every individual and true Believer receive the full Remission of his Sins, and a Justification unto Life eternal. For,

3. WE here see, *that there is Peace with God*, and a Reconciliation for those that have most wickedly rebelled against Him.

THIS likewise appears from the Work we are now engaged in : For had not God been
in

in CHRIST *reconciling the World unto Himself*, there would be no Gospel-Ministers sent forth to negotiate a Peace between God and Men.

It is the Business of these Ambassadors to beseech Men in Christ's Name to be reconciled to God, and to accept of a Reconciliation to Him upon his own infinitely gracious and condescending Terms, or in his own Way; and that is to accept of a free Pardon, the Grant of his meer sovereign good Pleasure, only for the Sake of JESUS CHRIST, without requiring any thing to be done by us, or wrought in us to be any Ground, Reason or Motive of our Justification.

4. WE further see a Grant of Health and Cure for the Souls of Men.

ONE remarkable Thing which came within the Observation and View of the Disciples was, their seeing *all manner of Sicknefs and Diseases healed*, Fevers were rebuked, Paralytic Disorders were called off: Moreover, Blind Eyes were opened, Deaf Ears were unstopped, the Dumb were made to speak, the Lame to walk, and the Weak were strengthened, yea, the Dead were raised to Life again.

AND in the Work of this Day we have an Evidence, that *as great Things as these are now wrought* in the present Times among Ourselves.

THOUGH

THOUGH it is true we have no Warrant to expect, nor do we see in a natural or physical Sense such Cures to be performed in a supernatural or miraculous Way now as they were then; yet, as to *spiritual Concerns*, there are as great Things now wrought upon the Souls of Men, as were then wrought in natural Things upon their Bodies.

And whenever we see, as we trust we do at this Time, with very great Pleasure a Gospel-Church *harmoniously and affectionately united* in their pious Endeavours to have a pure evangelical Ministry settled and continued among them according to the Appointment of CHRIST, that they may be farther instructed, established and assisted in the Faith, Worship and Obedience which the Gospel teaches and requires; I say, wherever we see this holy and tender Concern for the Honor of CHRIST, and his Divine Institution faithfully testified, we cannot but acknowledge that there has been a Cure wrought of the most contagious inveterate and dangerous *spiritual Maladies*; yea, that there has been a Resurrection from a State of Death in Sin to a Newness of Life in Grace and Holiness.

AND such as have had the real Experience of this healing Mercy themselves, cannot but account it a Blessedness to see others likewise truly made Partakers of it. And all these esteem it a farther Blessedness,

5. To see *Satan dethroned*, and the unclean Spirit cast out.

MINISTERS are called and ordained to be good *Soldiers of Jesus Christ*. So then, the Work of this Day shews that there is a *Warfare* to be still carried on in the Kingdom of CHRIST against the Kingdom of Satan; and though Ministers *live in the Flesh*, yet they are not to war after the *Flesh*; for the *Weapons of their Warfare* are not carnal, and so weak, but spiritual, and therefore mighty through GOD to the pulling down strong Holds, even the strong Holds of Sin and Satan.

By the Foolishness of Preaching GOD is pleased to save them that believe, and thereby He confounds the Wisdom, and overthrows the Power not only of wicked Men, but of Devils too.

So that when the LORD is pleased to bless His faithful Ministers, and to work effectually with Them, and by Them, then mighty Things are done, and Satan is made to fall from Heaven as really, and sometimes as speedily, if not as remarkably, as *Lightning itself*.

AND as the Design, so the Liberty and Privilege of a peaceable uninterrupted Performance of our public Work this Day shews, that CHRIST is made Head over all Things to the Church, and that the very Powers of Hell are

made subject to his Control, otherwise there is Reason to imagine, that the Enmity of the Seed of the Serpent against the Church would have now given us Disturbance one Way or other.

YEA, were it not that the LORD in his great Mercy has favoured us, and secured to us the happy Protestant Succession to the Crown in the illustrious House of HANOVER, we might have been under fearful Apprehensions, that this Place of Worship, through the Rage of a Popish persecuting Mob, might now have been in Flames, as I myself, and perhaps some others here present, saw it to be, through their Means, near Fifty Years ago, when the Reverend and Worthy Mr *Daniel Burgess*, and the Congregation to which he ministered stately, met here.

BUT happy for us, through the Divine Blessing upon the righteous and good Government of our present KING, as well as of his renowned Father KING GEORGE *the First*, Satan's Instruments and Emissaries have been laid under Restraints, and the Mighty among the Wicked have not been able to find their Hands, or to perpetrate the Mischief which their Hearts have devised.

BUT farther, it is still more delightful to remark, that in every Instance of true Conversion the strong Man is bound, and Satan is subdued. If this was not done by the omnipotent Arm which can make all Opposition

tion fall before it, there would be none of the sinful Descendants of *Adam* to be on CHRIST'S Side ; but every Man's Hand and Heart would be against Him and his Cause.

So that while we behold the Work of the *Gospel Temple* chearfully and zealously carrying on, as blessed be GOD we now do, we have an Evidence that Satan is dethroned, that some have *had their Eyes opened, and thus been turned from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto GOD.* And now, however the Devil may resist and oppose this Work, yet he cannot overthrow it ; *for it is of GOD, and therefore shall stand.* He who is at the Head of it is the renowned Branch of the House of *David* who will ever continue a Priest upon his Throne, and reign as a mighty Conqueror, till He hath put all Enemies under his Feet. Again,

6. WE here see *a full Provision made for the Supply of all a Believer's Wants.*

THE Ministers of CHRIST, you know, are called *Stewards of the Mysteries of GOD.* And since it is by the Divine Appointment that they bear this Character, and are employed in this Service, we have a plain Intimation in the present Work, that there is a rich Provision made for the Church's Supply. For there would be no Occasion, no Room for any to perform this Office of a Steward, if there was no Portion of good Things to

be distributed. Be assured then that there are all suitable Blessings, and a Fulness of them, prepared for the Household of Faith: Not only a Plenty of Bread and Wine, but of the most delicious Dainties, such as make *a Feast full of Marrow and Fatness*. There are also *Garments of Salvation* to clothe the Naked, and the most excellent *Eye-salve*, with all manner of precious Ointments, which, while they contain a healing Virtue, such as may cause the Weary to rest, they likewise yield a delightful Perfume, of which it may justly be said, *this is the Refreshing*, *Isai. xxviii. 12.* And that none who are interested in this Provision may have any Reason to fear that they shall ever want, they are assured, there is *Gold tried in the Fire*, and enough of it to make the poorest Believer rich to all Eternity.

7. Lastly : WE here see *that there is a Way settled and revealed by GOD, through which the most guilty Sinners may be recovered, and become Partakers of this glorious Provision.*

AND this Way is signified to be through a conjugal Relation to CHRIST and Union with Him.

THERE is not any thing which is *savingly Good* that can be ours, unless CHRIST *be ours*, and *we His*, that is, unless we be espoused to Him.

Do any ask, But what Reason can there be to expect, or what Encouragement to hope,

hope, that vile Sinners shall be espoused to the LORD of Life and the Prince of Glory?

Answ. THE Encouragement is, that GOD has appointed Ministers to be the Friends of the Bridegroom. This you know is a relative Term, and being applied to CHRIST, it supposes that there is a Church given to Him to be his Bride or Spouse.

AND in the present Work we are assured, that CHRIST is still sending forth his Ministers to endeavour in his Name, and through the Assistance of his Power and Grace, *to espouse Souls to one Husband, that they may be presented to Himself, as a chaste Virgin.*

HAVING thus endeavoured in the most suitable and solemn manner I could, according to the Desire and Appointment of this Church, *to open the Work of the Day*, I shall refer you to the Instructions and Directions, which will be given in the Sermon and Exhortation that are to follow, before the Worship is ended; that you may learn more particularly, than I have Time to suggest, how the Things that are now to be seen among us should be improved both by Ministers and People. And may the gracious Presence and Blessing of the LORD render all effectual to our happy Edification and Establishment in the Faith, Order and Conversation of the Gospel. *Amen.*

After

After the INTRODUCTION was delivered, a Deacon of the Church was desired to give an Account of the Steps that had been taken in the calling Mr Richard Winter to the Joint-Pastorship, which he did as follows.

THE Providence of God having inclined our much honored and aged Pastor to communicate to the Deacons of this Church his Desire of a Co-pastor to assist him in the Duties of that important Office, and intimating to them, that Mr Richard Winter would be a very suitable Person to be joined with him in that Relation; in Consequence thereof two Meetings were appointed at his House for Conversation and Prayer, to seek of God a right Way for us, and for our little ones, for this Matter belongeth unto them.

ON LORD'S-DAY (15th April) the Church were acquainted by our Pastor with his Desire, and a Church-meeting was appointed for the Wednesday following for Prayer and Consultation upon this Occasion; when, after deliberate Consideration, the Church, first agreed unanimously to the Necessity and Expediency of choosing a Co-pastor, and then resolved, Nem. Con. to give Mr Richard Winter an Invitation to that Office: And, from thence concluding after we had besought our God for this, that he was entreated of us, we accordingly sent

sent him a Call, signed by our Pastor and all the Brethren then present; to which he sent us an Answer, declaring his Acceptance of it, which was read at our next Church-meeting.—Mr *Richard Winter* was then desired to apply to the Church to which he stood related, for a Dismission to ours; which being granted, he was thereupon received into Communion with us on *Friday* the 1st *June*, at which time the Church signified their unanimous Acceptance of him as a Co-pastor.

WHEN we reflect upon the remarkable Leadings of Providence, and the Harmony there has been among us in following its Footsteps, we cannot but view the whole of the Procedure as appearing in the Lustre of a Divine Approbation.

The Church then (upon being desired) recognized their Call, and signified it by the lifting up of their Hands.

Then Mr Richard Winter was called on to give an Account in what Light the Call of the Church appeared to him, and of his Resolution thereupon. And he declared as follows:

WHEN I received the free, full and unexpected Invitation of this Church (dated *April* 18th last) to an Union in the Pastoral Office with the Rev. Mr *Bradbury*, I told the deputed Brethren, that I would

take a convenient Time to consider of it, before I gave my Answer in so weighty an Affair.—Accordingly I took frequent Occasion to deliberate upon it, to ask Counsel of God in it, and to examine my Views relative to it; and I cannot but say, upon being fully informed of the entire Harmony and Openness there was between this Church and their venerable Pastor in the several Steps that were taken, I was led to infer, that *God himself, and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ directed my Way unto Them.*

WHEN above a Fortnight was expired after my receiving their unanimous Call, I delivered in my Answer in the Affirmative. What now lies upon me, is to testify in this public manner my Acceptance of it; and this I do with the greatest Reverence and Cheerfulness of Soul in the Presence of God, Angels and Men; believing, that herein I comply with the Will of God in his Providence. Sensible of my Insufficiency for so arduous an Undertaking as that of the *Pastoral Charge*, I trust in the Promise of the glorious IMMANUEL, *That he will be with his Ministers always even to the End of the World.* And I earnestly entreat the Prayers, not only of this Church, but of all who are present to *behold our Order*, that I may be assisted and succeeded in discharging the Duties of that high and important Office I have now in
this

this open and solemn Manner taken upon me.

After this Account Mr Richard Winter was desired to give a Summary of the Doctrines he believed and preached; whereupon he made the following Confession.

Confession of Faith.

IT is with the utmost Freedom I address myself to that *reasonable Service*, now required of me, of declaring in this public manner those *Articles of my Faith* which I have extracted from the Word of God. In doing this, I not only comply with the Practice of Ministers in the Primitive Church, and of those who succeed them in the Preaching of the Gospel, but herein I follow the Example of my GREAT LORD AND MASTER Himself, who *declared GOD's Faithfulness and Salvation, and did not conceal his Loving-kindness and his Truth from the great Congregation*; and of whom we also read; *That before Pontius Pilate he witnessed a good Confession.*

WHAT I have believed in my Heart, and for a Course of Years made known in my

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stated Ministrations in other Religious Assemblies*, I shall on this solemn Occasion *confess with my Mouth; having renounced the hidden Things of Dishonesty, not walking in Craftiness, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully; but by a Manifestation of the Truth shall commend myself to every Man's Conscience in the Sight of God.*

I. I THEN here acknowledge, that I take *the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament* to be the Revelation of the Mind and Will of GOD to Man, and the only Rule to direct us in those Things which concern the Glory of GOD, and our real Happiness; firmly believing, *That all Scripture is given by Inspiration of God, and is profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Instruction in Righteousness.*

II. In this sacred Book I read, and therefore believe, *That the Lord our God is one Lord, and that in the Unity of the Godhead, there is a Trinity of Persons, for there are Three that bear Record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these Three are One.* This Doctrine of three distinct Persons in one undivided Essence I look on to be so important, that it lies at the Foundation of the Christian Religion; that we have no right

* At the Reverend Mr Hall's Meeting-House, and at that in *Islington.*

Know-

Knowledge of God, and therefore can give no acceptable Worship to Him without a cordial Belief of it; a Truth above the Comprehension of human Reason, but as it is revealed in the Holy Scriptures I humbly adore it, and chearfully receive it on the Divine Authority.

III. I BELIEVE that GOD, from all Eternity, did, for the Manifestation of his Glory, purpose and *determine whatever comes to pass*. Those things which are contingent to us are certain to Him, *who works all things after the Counsel of his own Will*.

IV. ACCORDING to this Plan which God formed in his own eternal Mind, he created, upholds and governs all things. Particularly, he made Man *after his own Image, in Knowledge, Righteousness and true Holiness*, to whom he not only gave a Law, but with whom he entered into Covenant as the Head and Representative of all that descended from him by ordinary Generation, the Terms of which Covenant Man had a Power to fulfil; but being created mutable, and left to his own Choice, he wilfully transgressed the Divine Command by eating the forbidden Fruit, and thereby brought Guilt and Misery, not only on himself, but on all his Posterity, to whom his Sin is righteously imputed. *By the Disobedience of one Man many were made*
D 2 *Sinners.*

Sinners. So then, there is not a Son or Daughter of *Adam* comes into the World but is born under *Adam's* Covenant, or the Covenant of Works, which threatens Condemnation without any Mixture of Mercy.

V. IN Consequence of our original Apostasy from God, I believe we are not only by *Nature Children of Wrath*, but are born with *a carnal Mind, which is Enmity against God*. The Seeds and Principles of all Sin being deeply rooted in us, whereby all our Powers are debased and defiled in the Sight of God. From this Fountain of Sin within us all our actual Transgressions proceed, *the Wages* of every one of which is *Death*, temporal and eternal.

VI. MOREOVER, from the sacred Scriptures I learn, that when God might have executed the Sentence of his righteous Law upon the whole human Race because of Sin, he was pleased to *choose in CHRIST* a certain and determinate Number out of the corrupt Mass, and ordain them to eternal Life; which Choice I believe to be eternal, free, sovereign and immutable. *They were chosen in Christ before the Foundation of the World, that they might be holy and without blame before him in Love; and, as many as were ordained to eternal Life shall believe.* And as to the rest of Mankind God leaves them to walk in their own Way,

Way, and determined to punish them because of their Sin. *What if God, willing to shew his Wrath and make his Power known, endured with much Long-suffering the Vessels of Wrath fitted to Destruction?*

VII. GOD having from Eternity chose some of our apostate Race to eternal Life, I believe he did then enter into a new Covenant, commonly and justly stiled, *the Covenant of Grace*; in which GOD the FATHER gave the Elect to his eternal SON, whom he appointed and constituted their Head and Mediator; when GOD the SON engaged to become their Redeemer and Savior, and GOD the HOLY GHOST their Sanctifier, Comforter and Guide, even unto Death.—This new and everlasting Covenant has been made known to the Church at sundry Times, and in various Forms; but though there have been divers Administrations, it has been but *one and the self-same Covenant* for Substance in all Ages.

VIII. ACCORDING to the Settlements of this everlasting Covenant I believe that the *second Person* in the glorious Trinity, *who thought it not Robbery to be equal with God*, when the Fulness of Time was come, *did assume the entire human Nature*; and that it was necessary he should be such a complex Person, GOD-MAN, in order to his fully executing

executing the Offices of a *Prophet*, of a *Priest* and of a *King*, as the Redeemer of his Church and People.

IX. FROM the Scriptures I learn, that the LORD JESUS CHRIST, when in his State of Humiliation, not only declared the Father, enacted Laws, and set us an Example, but also *was made under the Law, which he magnified and made honorable by his Obedience unto Death*; I therefore believe, that he fulfilled all Righteousness in the room and stead of those whom the Father had given him; and by his one Sacrifice for Sin he made full Satisfaction to the Justice of God, and procured Reconciliation for his People.

X. THIS same JESUS, after continuing under the Power of Death for a Time, I believe *did rise again*, as a *Public Person*, by his own Power; did ascend into Heaven, where he sits at the right Hand of God the Father, and ever lives to make Intercession, as a *Priest on his Throne*, by Virtue of which Intercession the Benefits of his Death are conveyed and applied to all those whom he redeemed by his precious Blood.

XI. I BELIEVE then, that every Individual of them whom the FATHER chose to Salvation, and the SON purchased, shall, at the appointed Time, be *effectually called* by the
HOLY

HOLY SPIRIT out of a State of Sin and Death into a State of Holiness and Life; in which mighty Change Man is entirely passive, having no Power, nor Will of his own to do that which is spiritually good; but on the contrary, is full of Opposition to the Call of God, till his Mind is savingly enlightened, and his Will renewed by insuperable Grace.

XII. I FARTHER believe, that they who are effectually called are *justified*; by which I mean, they are freed from a State of Guilt and Condemnation, and brought into a State of Acceptance with God; not for the Sake of any thing wrought in them, or performed by them, but entirely for the Sake of CHRIST's most perfect Righteousness, which is *imputed* to them, or placed to their Account, and received by Faith alone, which Faith is *the Operation of God*.

XIII. MOREOVER, I believe, that they who are justified are not only *adopted* into God's Family, but are also *sanctified throughout in Spirit Soul and Body*. The same Almighty SPIRIT, who united them to CHRIST, and made them new Creatures, carries on his Work within them in a *gradual manner*, enabling them in the use of appointed Means to die unto Sin, and to live unto Righteousness.

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XIV. CONSEQUENT on this, I believe, that where the good Work of Grace is begun, *it shall be performed until the Day of Jesus Christ.* They who are no better than *nominal Christians* may fall *finally* from their Profession; and some who are *real Christians* may be permitted, for wise and holy Ends, to fall *fouly* to the Dishonor of God, and their own Hurt; but though they fall they shall arise, and *shall be kept by the Power of God through Faith unto Salvation.* Their *Perseverance* to the End depends not on themselves, but on the Covenant, the Promise and the Oath of God, on the Efficacy of CHRIST'S Sacrifice and Intercession, and on the Residence of the HOLY SPIRIT within them.

XV. I BELIEVE that a *Christian Church* is a Company of professed Believers, who have formed themselves into a Society, according to the Institution of CHRIST, and the Rules of his Gospel, with a Desire and a Design to walk together in all his Ordinances and Commandments blameless, to his Glory, and their mutual Edification. To such a Church or Body of Christians, the Great Mediator, as their only Head, has given full Right and Authority to make Choice of their own Officers, to receive Members into their Communion, and to put away from among them those

those whose Walk is unbecoming their Christian Profession.

XVI. THE standing Officers which CHRIST has appointed and fixed in his Church are *Pastors, Teachers, and Deacons*; the former are to give themselves to Prayer, the Ministry of the Word and the Administration of the Sacraments; the other to take Care of the external Concerns of the Church, or to serve the Lord's Table, the Minister's Table, and the Poor's Table.

XVII. THE *Sacraments* which CHRIST has ordained in his Church are no more than Two, Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

XVIII. BAPTISM I believe to be the initiating Ordinance into the visible Church; and as Circumcision was a Sign and Seal of the Righteousness of Faith, so the washing with Water, *in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, does signify and seal our ingrafting into CHRIST, the Remission of our Sins, and the Sanctification of our Souls. And, as GOD has promised in the everlasting Covenant to be a God to his People, and to *their Seed*, I therefore believe that this Ordinance of Baptism is to be administered, not only to those who profess their Faith in CHRIST, but also to their Infant-offspring.

XIX. *THE Lord's Supper* is the other Sacrament of the New Testament, which was instituted by CHRIST the same Night in which he was betrayed. The Breaking of the Bread and the Pouring forth of the Wine, I look on to be the Memorials of the meritorious Sufferings and satisfactory Death of our Surety and Saviour. This Ordinance was designed for the spiritual Nourishment of Believers, and their Growth in Grace, and to be a Bond of their Communion with CHRIST, and with each other.

XX. I BELIEVE, that it is appointed to Men once to die. *The Body returns to the Earth as it was, but the Spirit returns to God that gave it.* The Souls of the Righteous, upon their Dissolution, depart and are immediately with CHRIST in Glory; and on the contrary, the Souls of the Wicked at their Death are turned into Hell to receive the Wages of their Iniquity.

XXI. The Scripture also assures me, that there shall be a *Resurrection of the Dead, both of the Just and of the Unjust.* And that God has appointed a Day in which he will judge the World in Righteousness by that Man whom he has ordained.

I BELIEVE therefore, that the Souls and Bodies of the Righteous, being brought into
 2 a State

a State of Re-union in that glorious Day, shall be publicly owned and acquitted by their glorified Redeemer, who will pronounce that joyful Sentence, *Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World.* And, on the other Hand, the Souls and Bodies of the Wicked, being re-united, shall be called before the impartial Tribunal of Divine Justice to receive that dreadful Sentence, *Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting Fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels. These shall go away into everlasting Punishment, but the Righteous into Life eternal.*

THESE are the Articles of that Faith which was once delivered unto the Saints; and, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the Spirit of our God, I design to contend earnestly for them in the Course of my Ministry, and to lay them as Foundations on which the Duties of Christianity are to be built, knowing *they are Doctrines according to Godliness.*

The Rev. Mr *Bradbury's* Discourse
on Imposition of Hands.

I TIM. IV. 14.

*Neglect not the Gift that is in thee,
which was given thee by Prophecy,
with the laying on of the Hands of
the Presbytery.*

THESE two Things are absolutely distinct from one another, and both of them necessary in order to a Minister's Commission: They are what *Paul*, as a wise Master-builder, gives to his Son *Timothy* after the common Faith. *Neglect not*, do not forget it, as a Qualification for the Work, but use it as a Means of Service: Thou art intrusted with it, and thou must improve it; there is no doing without it.

Neglect not the Gift that is in thee; it is freely given already on purpose for ministerial Service. This may refer to those eminent Abilities by which *Timothy* was furnished for every good Work. We read, 1 Tim. i. 18.

This

This Charge I commit unto thee, Son Timothy, according to the Prophecies which went before on thee. God had set him apart in an extraordinary Way by choosing him to a particular Honor in his Service; there is no Man like-minded with him: But this was not to prevent the common Rule in order to it; it is to be with the Imposition of Hands, as distinct from the other. What was peculiar to Timothy in Person is mentioned in the former Clause; but what is agreeable and usual to other Ministers, is laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery. And thus we read, Acts xiii. 1, 2, 3. There were in the Church that was at Antioch, certain Prophets and Teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the Tetrarch, and Saul: As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the Work whereunto I have called them: And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their Hands on them, they sent them away. Now these were the Presbytery that laid on Hands upon these Apostles, not only by Prophecy, but in the common Way that others obtained the like Appointment. Now this Action, though it is no more than a Ceremony, and of no Value in itself, yet if it be by a Divine Appointment, who shall say unto God, What dost thou? But let us remember, Heb. iii. 6. that Christ is a Son over his own House, whose

House

House we are. And when the Meaning is but little, the greater is the Disobedience if we neglect it. As *Naaman the Syrian* could not be excused, if he had not dipped seven times in *Jordan*; nor he at the Pool of *Siloam*, had he not washed with Water.

WE are called to an Observation that is still lower, and more inconsiderable, and that is eating a small Quantity of Bread, and drinking a little Portion of Wine, *to shew forth our Lord's Death.* Does any body think there is any thing in the *external Action*? No, that must not be discerning the Lord's Body: And yet, I hope, they that do not come to the Table can hardly be said to partake of the Ordinance.

Now, as this Imposition of Hands has been used on many Occasions, and is of a long Reputation both in the Old and New Testament, it is strange that Christians cannot find out some Meaning among them to regulate their Conduct by. Is it without Signification? I had rather *mistake* it, than *totally neglect* it: Either they meant nothing at all by it, or they did something: Is it laid down so often in vain? But when the Apostle bid *Timothy lay Hands suddenly on no Man*; what, Did he mean nothing by it? The Word *suddenly* might have been left out, and then it would be, *lay Hands on no Man*: But it is unworthy of the great God to mention any thing about an Ordinance in vain.

SOME

Some would plead that it relates only to the Conveyance of a *miraculous Gift*, but that is impossible: No body would hinder the Swiftneſs of a Cure, and therefore that can never be the Meaning: And here muſt be a Solemnity in it by the Confluence of ſo many Miniſters to give *the right Hand of Fellowship*. When we read, *Heb. vi. 1, 2.* of the Principles of the Doctrine of Chriſt, we are to go on to Perfection; not laying again the Foundation of Repentance from dead Works, and of Faith towards God: Of the Doctrine of Baptiſms, and of laying on of Hands, of the Reſurrection of the Dead, and of eternal Judgment: And when it is mentioned among ſo many things it is no Trifle. It has been commonly uſed among the Reformed Churches, quite through the Reformation in Germany, and in our Neighbourhood in Scotland, and we are well aſſured in New England alſo, which are ſettled in the ſame Faith and Order with ourſelves. I would never have ſubmitted to it had I not thought it had been commanded; and I remember Dr Owen expreſſly ſays, “ That where Opportunity of this thing may be had, it is a tranſgreſſing of the ordinary Rule if it is neglected.” But if any Perſon ſeem to be contentious, and puts on a Humour, and is ſelf-willed, we have no ſuch Cuſtom, nor the Churches of Chriſt. Call now if there be any that will answer thee, and to which of the Saints wilt thou turn? We have already

too many Divisions among us. **I** should like to see the People of God united, not only in Faith, but walking by the same Rule; *that whatsoever Things are decent, whatsoever Things are lovely, whatsoever Things are pure, &c. if there be any Virtue, and if there be any Praise, think on these Things.*

I HAVE had the utmost Satisfaction in having my Ordination *after the due Order, by laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery*: That so many eminent Servants of CHRIST in the Ministry were pleased to own me as a Fellow-labourer with them in the Bonds of the Gospel. **W**e understand nothing by it of a *Conveyance of a Ministerial Power*. **P**aul and **Barnabas** were already Ministers: No, that is a *Popish, Prelatical*, and really no better than a *Mechanical* Notion, but it is a *Consent*, that the Ministers of CHRIST give their Approbation, with a Desire of a Blessing on those that they admit into the Fellowship of the Gospel.

AND **I** do freely and with Delight admit **Mr Richard Winter** into the Office of Co-pastorship with myself, desiring you not only to pray for *personal*, but *social* Graces, that we may *walk together in Love*, and *build up one another in the Congregation in our most holy Faith*: Wherefore we shall proceed to set him apart by the unanimous Consent of the whole Church; *be having given up himself to the Lord, and to us by the Will of God.*

AND he was accordingly solemnly set apart by Prayer, and the Imposition of the Hands of several Ministers.

T H E

S E R M O N.

IT was with no inconsiderable Weight on my Spirit that I complied with the Desire, expressed to me from the aged Pastor and Brethren of the Church stately assembling in this Place, to engage in *this Part* of the solemn Work of this Day : But as GOD (whom I desire to (a) *serve with my Spirit in the Gospel of his Son*) thus called me to this important Service, mine Eyes have been up to Him in my Preparations for it, and in his Name and Strength I would now go forth to it. I shall use *great Plainness of Speech, as seeking not to please Men, but God*. I would willingly say nothing to you for myself, or from myself, but speak for the LORD, with a View to his Glory in your Edification, my Christian Friends, the Members of this Church, and the Edification of this numer-

(a) Rom. i. 9.

ous Assembly ; and I would speak from Him as speaking to us in his Word, the Scriptures of Truth.—Let me then intreat you, and all here present, seriously to attend to what (in most humble Dependence on Divine Assistance) I shall now lay before you from that particular Part of Scripture which you will find in

I TIM. III. 15. middle Clause.

—*The Church of the living God.*----

THESE Words are Part of an excellent inspired Epistle written by *Paul*, that eminent Apostle, to *Timothy*, whom, in this and his Second Epistle to him, he calls *his Son, his own Son, his dearly beloved Son*; not that he was so in a *natural* Relation, or by meer natural Affection, but in a *spiritual* Relation, and by sanctified Affection. The Apostle had either (b) in *Christ Jesus* begotten him through the Gospel, or at least had been a nursing Father to him, had (c) *nourished him up in the Words of Faith and good Doctrine*. They had been Fellow-travellers and Fellow-labourers in the Ministry of the Gospel. The Apostle had been an Eye-witness to *Timothy's* Gifts, Graces, Diligence, Zeal and

(b) 1 Cor. iv. 15.

(c) 1 Tim. iv. 6.

Faith-

Faithfulness in fulfilling his Ministry, and he beareth an honourable Testimony to him, *that as a Son with the Father he had served with him in the Gospel, Phil. ii. 19—22.* and Timothy had fully known the Apostle's Doctrine, manner of Life, Purpose, Faith, Long-suffering, Charity, Patience, Persecutions and Afflictions, which came unto him in several Places, *2 Tim. iii. 10, 11.* No Wonder then there was such entire and endeared Friendship between them. — Affections and Friendship thus founded, founded upon and cemented by Union to CHRIST, Union in the Faith, Hope and Holiness of the Gospel, are most intimate, sweet and lasting. Timothy was not an ordinary Bishop or Pastor, but an Evangelist, an Assistant to and under the Apostles in the planting and guiding Churches in the Faith and Order of the Gospel. In order to the Discharge of the Duties of *this Office* he had been left by the Apostle at *Ephesus*. Paul had besought him to abide for a while there, Chap. i. 3. and to him, while at *Ephesus* (as it seems probable) was this Epistle sent, the general Design of which we have expressed in this and the preceding Verse. *These Things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly; but, if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the House of God, that is, (as he immediately explains it) the Church of the living God, the Pillar and Ground of Truth.*

THE Limits of my Time will not permit me to enlarge on the Context, or even particularly consider the whole of this Verse. To this one Clause—*The Church of the living God*—I desire your present serious Attention. The Apostles and Primitive Ministers of CHRIST preached the Gospel first to the *Jews*, and then (according to CHRIST's Commission) to *(d)* every Creature of Mankind that would hear it. The Hand of the LORD was with them, and many in one Place and another believed. *Those (e)* who were ordained to eternal Life truly credited the Gospel Report and Record, received, trusted and gloried in that Saviour whom the Gospel revealed. These Persons, and those who professed and appeared to be such, by Divine Warrant and Appointment united in Societies, as their Situation gave them Opportunity. *They gave (f)* themselves to the Lord, and under the Direction of the Apostles were united in sacred Bonds to one another, for the Glory of GOD, and their mutual Support and Encouragement in the Profession of the Gospel-Truth, and a stated assembling together for Public Worship in all Gospel Ordinances of him whose they were. A Society thus formed is called, *a Church, the Church of God, or, in God*, in such a Place, as at *Corinth, Philippi, &c.* the Persons who constituted such a

(d) Mark xvi. 15.

(e) Acts xiii. 48.

(f) 2 Cor. viii. 5.

Church, or of whom it consisted, are characterised and described in the Epistles, *as Saints, called to be Saints, sanctified in Christ Jesus, faithful Brethren*, and the like. As the Word of the LORD ran and was glorified, many in a short Compass of Time, very many such Societies, were collected and united; Officers by Divine Appointment, Pastors, Teachers and Deacons, Overseers and Guides under CHRIST, for their spiritual and temporal Concerns, were chosen and ordained in and by each Church under the Direction of the Apostles, or Evangelists, *Acts* xiv. 23. *When they had ordained them Elders* (by the Suffrage or Vote, the lifting up of the Hands of the Church, for so the original Word signifies) *in every Church*. In these Churches the Kingdom of CHRIST, *as such*, becomes and appears visible; the Members of these Churches, and those who should of Right belong to them, make up that Body or Church of CHRIST for which he gave himself. There were several such Churches in *Judea, Samaria, &c.* which are called *the Churches of Judea, &c.* nor do we once in the New Testament read, that these Congregations *collectively*, or as *represented* by their Officers, are ever called *the Church* of such a Kingdom or Province, as *the Church of Judea, the Church of Galatia*, or any other Country. These sacred Societies, Congregations or Churches, were in close Union and Com-
munion

munions with each other, united in one common Head JESUS CHRIST, (1 Cor. i. 2. *To the Church of God which is at Corinth—with all that in every Place call on the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours*) and also in the same Faith, Order and Worship, and were under the strongest Ties to advise and assist each other for promoting their mutual Edification and common Interest; but it is not so much as once intimated (as I conceive) that any one Church, however considerable it might be for Number of Members, spiritual Gifts and Graces, (and much less on any worldly Account) had *any Dominion and Authority* over another Church. They appear to be all in this respect *co-ordinate and independent*. This was the Case after the Resurrection and Ascension of CHRIST. The Constitution of the *Jewish Church*, as *national*, was *peculiar* to that Dispensation of the Covenant they were under, and yet that Church was (g) *Congregational*, as well as *National*; their Public Worship, *as a Church*, was confined to one Place, to which all the Males were by Divine Command obliged to attend three Times a Year. But I shall not farther enlarge here. These Thoughts have been frequently hinted on such Occasions as this, and have been solidly illustrated and confirmed by our pious Writers in the Controversy of Church-government, and parti-

(g) Deut. xii. 5—18. xiv. xv. xvi. 1—17.

cularly by that most eminent and excellent Divine Dr Owen (b). It is of *such a Church* as we have been briefly describing, a New-Testament-Church, that the Apostle in the Words of my Text speaks, the Church at *Ephesus*, (as I apprehend where *Timothy* was left) or any other Church to which *Timothy* might at any Time by Divine Providence be led, and be concerned with: Such a Church at any Time, in any Place, is *the Church of the living God — the living God — (i) He whose Name is JEHOVAH*, who hath Being and Life in and from himself, and is the Fountain of Being and Author of Life to every living Creature; He is the *living God*, as distinguished from all the Vanities of the Nations, their dumb Idols, their Gods many, and Lords many: The *living God* who is one, his Name, his Nature one. It is this GOD who hath made himself known by Revelation to the Children of Men; revealed himself in his Word the holy Scriptures, in his Covenant, and the Dispensation thereof; and how he is the true and *living God* there revealed, or what hath he made known of himself as distinguished from all other Beings. What he is in himself, is and can be only fully known to himself; *Who can by searching find out God? who can find out the Almighty to Perfection?* Job xi. 7. But his Word, which

(b) Dr Owen's Enquiry, &c. and True Nature of a Gospel Church.

(i) Psa. lxxxiii. 18.

makes

makes known his Covenant, reveals him to be one God subsisting and acting in three Divine, Eternal, Equal Persons, FATHER, SON and HOLY SPIRIT; or (k) *Three that bear Record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and Holy Ghost, which Three are One.* This is the God who reveals himself in the Scriptures, who in and by them speaks to Men, and whose, as the only true and living God, the Church is. *The Church of the living God.* This Sentence I would farther consider: And,

- I. ENQUIRE *how, or in what Respects, a Christian Church is the Church of the living GOD, FATHER, SON and HOLY SPIRIT.*
- II. POINT out *somewhat of the Duty of a Church, in this View of it.* And,
- III. CONCLUDE *with some Reflections by Way of Improvement.*

- I. ENQUIRE *how, or in what Respects, a Christian Church is the Church of the living GOD, of this only true and living God, FATHER, SON and HOLY SPIRIT.*

A CHURCH's being the Church of the living God, certainly intends that he hath some *peculiar Propriety* in them and Concern with them. JEHOVAH is the Creator, Proprietor and Governor of *all Things*. The Heavens, the Earth, the Sea, and all Things

(k) 1 John v. 7.

in them are his, for he made them : By him also they are supported, regulated and disposed : To this the Scriptures bear frequent and most clear Testimony. *Behold (l) the Heaven, and the Heaven of Heavens is the Lord's thy God, the Earth also with all that is therein. The (m) Earth is the Lord's and the Fulness thereof; the (n) Sea is his, and he made it, and his Hands formed the dry Land. He (o) doth according to his Will in the Army of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of the Earth : In a Word, of him (p), and through him, and to him are all Things. But his Propriety in, and Concern with the Church is of a peculiar Nature ; it is on the Foot of and according to Counsels of manifold amazing Wisdom and Prudence, rich and distinguishing Love and Grace, Purposes formed in and from himself, Counsels that were in God between the Divine Persons before any Creature existed, even from Eternity (q) known unto God indeed are all his Works from the Beginning ; for they are all according to an eternal Plan, he (r) worketh all things after the Counsel of his own Will ; hath fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass ; but the Church is his upon an eternal gracious Covenant-plan.*

(l) Deut. x. 14.

(m) Psal. xxiv. 1.

(n) Psal. xcv. 5.

(o) Dan. iv. 35.

(p) Rom. xi. 36.

(q) Acts xv. 18.

(r) Ephes. i. 4—11.

LET us attend to a few Particulars, only let me observe (and it is a Thought that must be carried with us all along, as we consider how or in what Respects a Church is and appears to be the Church of the living God) that we intend or mean such Persons only in a Church who ought *by right* to be in and of it; *viz. true Believers or real Christians*; of such Persons the Churches to whom the Epistles were directed are supposed to consist, while yet there might be and no doubt were those in them, as well as in the Churches in the present Day, who had a Name that they lived, while in fact they were dead in Trespases and Sins; and yet the Apostle says such Things to and of those Churches which were true of and belonged to those only who were such as the whole Church ought to have been, and in a Judgment of Charity was considered as being, that is, a Church of real Christians; and it is just the same as to the Particulars which I have collected from the Scriptures, and shall now lay before you.

(1.) *It is the Church of the living God, as being from everlasting beloved of him, and chosen by him; or as consisting of the Objects of his eternal Love and Choice.*

THE *living God* is the *eternal God*, and the Covenant by which the Church is his is an everlasting Covenant, a Covenant made with an everlasting Head, and in him with Sinners of Mankind, a certain and determinate

nate Number of them in whose complete Salvation and Happiness JEHOVAH determined to be glorified: He freely and *from everlasting* (s) *loved them*, and therefore chose and distinguished them from all the rest of Mankind, as (t) *Vessels of Mercy afore-time* in his Purpose prepared unto Glory. This was peculiarly the Act of the eternal FATHER. The Church then is God's as *chosen of the Father in Christ before the Foundation of the World*, Ephes. i. 4. The SON of GOD as from (u) *everlasting set up* was (w) the FATHER'S *Elect*, in whom, as such, his Soul delighted, and as viewed thus in him his Soul delighted in all those who were given to and intrusted with him, as their Covenant-head. This was the *Commencement* (if there is no Impropriety in the Expression) or the Foundation of that Relation which subsists, and ever shall subsist between the living God and every true Christian Church. They are his, because beloved of him and chosen by him, being (x) *elect according to the Fore-knowledge of God the Father*, that is, his distinguished Love and Kindness towards them, before the Foundation of the World, &c.

(2.) IT is the Church of the living GOD by Purchase.

(s) Jer. xxxi. 3.
(t) Rom. ix. 23.
(u) Prov. viii. 23.

(w) Isai. xlii. 1.
(x) 1 Pet. i. 2.

A CHURCH of GOD consists of Men, sinful Creatures, such by Nature and Practice: By (y) *one Man's* (the first *Adam's*) *Disobedience* they were made Sinners; and are, as descending from him (z), by Nature *unclean*, and not only so, but each one has personally and actually (a) *finned*, and come short of the *Glory of God*; as such they were all under awful Obligations to the Justice of God, which ever required, and must have its Rights: The Law, the eternal Rule of Right, denounced its most awful (b) *Threatnings* and *Curses against every Soul of Man that does Evil*: What then must become of the LORD's Choice? How will his everlasting Love take Place? Can JEHOVAH deny himself? Shall his Justice be injured, and Government dishonoured, that his Purpose according to Election might stand? This *could not* be, and God in his everlasting Covenant made Provision that it *should not* be; that the Church should be his, and yet not the least Stain be on his Nature, Law or Government; for the Church was to be bought and redeemed; for this, its Head, the eternal SON (c) in the Covenant, undertook and engaged, and he has performed it: He took on him the human Nature in the appointed Time, (d) *was made Flesh*, and by the per-

(y) Rom. v. 19.

(z) Job xiv. 4. Psal. li. 5.

(a) Rom. iii. 23. Rom. ii. 9.

(b) Gal. iii. 10.

(c) Psal. xl. 6—8.

(d) John i. 14.

fect Holiness of his Nature and compleat Obedience to the Law even unto Death he has wrought out, and (d) brought in an everlasting Righteousness: He (e) gave himself for the Church; gave his Life a Ransom for many; he thus bare the Penalty of the Law in their Room and Stead; so Justice was satisfied, and they redeemed, (f) redeemed from the Curse of the Law by his being made a Curse for them; redeemed, (g) not with corruptible Things as Silver and Gold, but with the precious Blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without Blemish and without Spot. A Church then is the Church of the living GOD, as bought with a Price; it is the Purchase of the eternal SON united to human Nature. The Church (h) at Ephesus (and it is equally true of every Christian Church) is said to be the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own Blood.

(3.) It is the Church of the living GOD as called by divine effectual Grace, and fully pardoned and accepted through a divine Atonement, in a divine Righteousness.

A CHURCH is the LORD'S as quickened and called by the HOLY SPIRIT. The FATHER'S Love, and the Redemption wrought out by CHRIST are applied by the efficacious Power of the eternal SPIRIT. He as the SPIRIT of the FATHER and the SON quickeneth

(d) Dan. ix. 24.

(e) Eph. v. 25. Mark x 45.

(f) Gal. iii. 13.

(g) 1 Pet. i. 18, 19.

(h) Acts xx. 28.

dead (i) who were dead in Transgressions and Sins. God (k) loveth them, and calleth them with an holy Calling. He (l) loveth by the Washing of Regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost. They are with the rest of Mankind (m) dead dry Bones, but the HOLY SPIRIT breatheth upon them, breatheth Life, a Principle of spiritual Life into them; effectually brings Home the Gospel to their Hearts, and (n) opens their Hearts to attend to it; they are born (o) of the Spirit, and are Spirit, are made (p) new Creatures in Christ Jesus. The Trumpet is blown, their (q) Ears are unstopped, and they know the joyful Sound; they receive and believe the (r) Word of Truth, as a Word sent to them and applied to them as the Word of God, the Gospel of their Salvation, (s) which effectually worketh in them; they believe in the Name of Christ, that is, they receive and trust in his Person, Righteousness and Grace, as a suitable complete Saviour, having (t) fled to him as a Refuge set before them, in him they actually find Safety; they (u) receive that ~~by~~ by Approbation, Trust and Dependence which CHRIST hath made, and the FATHER hath accepted (w); the Righ-

(i) Ephes. ii. 1.

(k) 2 Tim. i. 9.

(l) Titus ii. 5.

(m) Ezek. xxxvii. 1—10.

(n) Acts xvi. 14.

(o) John iii. 6.

(p) 2 Cor. v. 17.

(q) Mai. xxxv. 5. Psal.

lxxxix. 15.

(r) Ephes. i. 13.

(s) 1 Thes. ii. 13.

(t) Heb. vi. 18.

(u) Rom. v. 11.

(w) Rom. iii. 21, 22, 24.

teousness

teousness of CHRIST is imputed to them, that Righteousness of God, which without the Law is manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the Righteousness of God, which is by Faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe, for there is no Difference; they are justified freely by his Grace through the Redemption which is in Jesus Christ; are (x) made accepted in the Beloved, in whom they have Redemption through his Blood, even the Forgiveness of Sins, according to the Riches of Divine Grace. Thus the Church is the Church of the living God as called by his Grace, brought nigh to him in Pardon, Reconciliation, Likeness and Communion.

(4.) IT is the Church of the living GOD as it is the Seat of his peculiar Residence.

THE living GOD is the infinite GOD; his Nature, his Presence can admit of no Bounds; the (y) Heaven is his Throne, the Earth is his Footstool; Do (z) not I fill Heaven and Earth, saith the Lord? And yet it is certain JEROVAH is present in Zion so as he is not elsewhere; he dwells there as a Covenant-GOD; he manifests himself as such to his People more especially in his Church: This was the Case of old. In (a) all Places where I record my Name, I will come unto thee, and will bless thee. Accordingly, in Judah God was known, and his Name was great in Israel, in Salem was his Ta-

(x) Ephes. i. 6, 7.

(y) Isai. lxvi. 1.

(z) Jer. xxiii. 24.

(a) Exodus xx. 24.

tabernacle, and his Dwelling-place in Zion, Psal. lxxvi. 1, 2. The Seat of his Worship was there, and therefore his (b) Power and Glory was seen there; he said of it, this (d) is my Rest for ever, here will I dwell, for I have desired it. Literal Zion is no longer the holy Mountain, but the LORD's Promise doth not fail; his Church is his Rest still; it (e) is his Inheritance and Portion; a particular Church is his (f) Temple, for he reveals his Glory to and in it: It is his (g) House; he laid its Foundation, he erected it and resides in it: It is his (h) Husbandry, he cultivates and cherisheth it; his Doctrine, with his SPIRIT, drops as the Rain, and distils as the Dew upon it: It is his (i) Garden; he comes into it and takes his Walks in it, and with Pleasure views and pruneth, fructifieth and guards the Trees, the Plants of Righteousness, which he hath planted: He calls the sacred Spot his own, an Inclosure taken out of the World, which in Comparison with it is but as an unfenced uncultivated Common, the wild Mountains of Prey: It is his (k) Palace where he resides with the spiritual Majesty, as well as Grace of the KING of Kings.

(5.) *It is the Church of the living GOD, as it is under his peculiar and gracious Government.*

(b) Psal. lxiii. 2.

(d) Psal. cxxxii. 13, 14.

(e) Deut. iv. 20. xxxii. 9.

(f) 2 Cor. vi. 16.

(g) 1 Tim. iii. 15.

(h) 1 Cor. iii. 9.

(i) Cant. iv. 12. v. 1.

(k) Psal. xlv. 15. xlviii. 3.

I SAY,

I SAY, his *gracious* Government. There is no Creature but is under the Government of JEHOVAH; (l) *his Kingdom ruleth over all*. The (m) vilest and worst of Men he maketh subservient to his own Glory, in the Execution of his Decrees, so that in this view they act for God, while their carnal Minds are Enmity against him: nay, Apostate Angels, those confirmed Enemies of the living God, are the Subjects of his Restraint and Control (n); they believe that he is; *know*, in some awful Measure, *the Power of his Anger*; are sensible that they are under his Restraint; that they are (o) *reserved in everlasting Chains under Darknes to the Judgment of the great Day*. But the Church consists of *the Subjects of his Grace*; they are (p) made willing to be under his Government: CHRIST as Mediator is their King, and he is indeed the universal Governor; (q) *all Power is given unto him in Heaven and Earth*, but as he ruleth graciously in, so he ruleth every where for, the Church: *he*, (r) that is, *the Father*, gave him *to be Head over all Things to the Church*, that is, for its Benefit. A Church also hath in and under CHRIST a Rule and Government *within itself*, for its own Regulation, Increase and Edification as an holy Society.

(l) Psal. ciii. 19.

(m) Acts iv. 27, 28.

(n) James ii. 19.

(o) Jude 6.

(p) Psal. cx. 3.

(q) Matt. xxviii. 18.

(r) Eph. i. 22.

II. *I shall now point out somewhat of the Duty of a Church, in this View of it, the Church of the living God.*

THE Relation of a Church to GOD, of the Members of it personally and particularly, and of the Church, as a Body, is a great Privilege, and calls for suitable Returns of Duty. The LORD requireth and expecteth such Returns, and his People know they are under the most endearing Obligations to make them. I can only mention a Part of their Duty.

(I.) *IT is the Duty of the Church of the living GOD stately to assemble together for his Worship.*

THAT it is the Duty of *rational Creatures* to worship GOD, and give Glory to him, is most evident; their Relation to him and Dependence upon him call for it, and *they (s)* are without excuse who do not glorify him as GOD: But Sin separated between GOD and Man: Sinful Creatures could never have worshipped him aright, or indeed have had any Encouragement or Will to worship him at all, had he not revealed himself to them in his New-Covenant of Love and Grace, and therein proclaimed his gloriously gracious Name. The Way is now open to come to GOD; in this Way should the Church of the

(s) Rom. i. 20, 21.

living

living God come ; not only *in the Closet*, and *Family*, but *publicly and socially, as a Church*. God hath sanctified a particular Portion of Time, *the Sabbath-Day* : the (t) Institution of the Sabbath is a *very gracious* Institution ; it was particularly designed and appointed to (u) be a Day of holy Rest ; the whole Time to be spent in the public and private Exercises of God's Worship, except so much as is to be taken up in the Works of Necessity and Mercy. It should never be forgotten, that it was to be a Day of (w) *holy Convocation*. The Change of the Day and of the Forms of Worship, doth not take away or lessen the Obligation of the Church to attend the Worship *itself* ; no, the more clearly the Grace and Glory of the Covenant are revealed, and the plainer (more free from burdensome Ceremonies) the Ordinances of Worship, the greater and more engaging is the Obligation thus to wait upon God. The Church of the living God should so remember the Christian Sabbath, the first Day of the Week, *as not to forsake* (x) *the assembling themselves together* on that Day ; each Member filling up his Place, worshipping God with and in that Church to which he belongs, unless hindered by Sickness, Situation or some other peculiar Circumstances ; and as the

(t) Neh. ix. 14. Exod. xvi. 29.

(u) Isa. lviii. 13.

(w) Lev. xxii. 3.

(x) Heb. x. 25.

Duties of his Relations and Calling in Life will admit, making Conscience of attending *Church-Meetings*, and other occasional Opportunities; how much doth this tend to the Glory of God, the Edification of the Church, and the Comfort and Usefulness of its Ministers? This hath been frequently taken Notice of on such Occasions as this; and is there not a Cause? Let any one who is not a Stranger in *Israel* say, let each Church-Member lay his Hand on his Heart and ask his own Conscience. The primitive Christians, and like them our pious Fathers, *(y)* loved the Habitation of God's House and the Place where his Honour dwelleth: And they suffered not a little because they would not forsake the assembling themselves together. It would be well if those Persons would consider this who plead as an Excuse for their frequent absenting themselves from public Worship, *that they attend to Reading and Prayer at Home.* What a Pity is it that in our Day of Liberty we should be more indifferent to public Worship than the Saints have been, when exposed to Persecution for attending it! Where Persons are indifferent to it, it is a Sign that Matters go not well in the Closet and Family; for there is a *sweet connection between sacred Duties, public and private.* May you, *my Christian Friends, the Members of this Church, be mindful of this your Duty, as a*

(y) Psal. xxxvi. 8,

Church; thus may you glorify God, edify one another, and encourage the Hearts and strengthen the Hands of your Pastors.—But, whom are Christians to worship? Him certainly whose as a Church they are, the living God; and He only is the *Object of our Worship* (z); *in his Name we were Baptized*, and *in his Name* (a) (as *Israel* of old was) *we are solemnly blessed* (b). *The Access we have to the Father, through Christ, by one Spirit*, supposes they are one God, for CHRIST could not effectually intercede *for us*, or the HOLY SPIRIT *in us*, if they were not of the very *same Nature and Substance* with the FATHER. We know we ought not to pay divine (c) Worship to any Being how excellent or exalted soever he may be supposed to be who is not *by Nature* God; for this we are sure of, that those who did Service unto them which *by Nature are no Gods*, at that Time knew not the *true God*, Gal. iv. 8.

(2.) THE Church of the living GOD should contend for his revealed Truth, and seek to propagate it.

By his Truth I mean all the Truths revealed in his Word, especially those which are *most peculiarly* revealed there, and most brightly display his Glory as the God of Salvation. Ministers indeed are more espe-

(z) Matt. xxviii. 19.

(a) Num. vi. 23. *ad finem* compare with

2 Cor. xiii. 14.

(b) Eph. ii. 18.

(c) Matt. iv. 10.

cially (d) *set for the Defence of the Gospel*; they are, they ought to be *Leaders* in this Part of the spiritual Warfare. Cowardice and Treachery in the Cause of CHRIST are base in any, but especially so in Those who have the Oversight of the Churches. I cannot help here observing, that it is known to you, and well known to the Churches in general, that *your aged and venerable Pastor* hath obtained Grace boldly and faithfully to defend the Truths of GOD, and particularly that *Foundation-Truth* of our Christian Hope and Comfort, that *the holy, holy, holy LORD of Hosts, the living GOD, is One GOD subsisting in Three Persons*. But, not Ministers only, but every Christian Church, as a Church, and each Member in his Station is to (e) *contend earnestly for the Faith once delivered to the Saints*. It was to the Church of the living GOD at *Philippi*, that the Apostle expressed his Concern (f) *that they might stand fast in one Spirit, with one Mind striving together for the Faith of the Gospel*. You, my Brethren, the Members of the Churches, are not called to hold forth the Word of Life in *public* Preaching of it, as *Ministers*, but you are called boldly to *profess and defend the Truth as private Christians*. Seek then to be *mighty in the Scriptures*, and the SPIRIT of GOD will help you to defend the scriptural Truth. Your Ministers, as

(d) Phil. i. 17.

(e) Jude 3.

(f) Phil. i. 27.

under CHRIST, are called to endeavour by their public Ministrations to spread the Saviour of the Knowledge of CHRIST: This they do more ordinarily in the Churches (may the LORD bless their Endeavours; may the *Word of the Lord have free Course and be glorified!*) but the Churches themselves are (g) *Candlesticks*; they contain Light, which is to be exhibited not only by the public Ministrations of their Pastors, but also by their whole Worship, Discipline and Conversation, and by their private Family Instructions. My Brethren, you that are *at the Head of Families*, what Good may you be the Instruments of doing? Professing Parents, seek to continue and propagate the Truth, by (b) *bringing up your Children in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord*. You have devoted them to the living God in *Christian Baptism*, seek to bring them up for him (i): Masters, give to your Servants, in this respect, *what is just and equal*; take what Care you can of their spiritual Interest. I would take it for granted that the Scriptures are read, and Prayers put up daily in many of your Families; let there be thus a (k) *Church in the House*. Instruct your Children and Servants in the Truth. You know you have an excellent Help for this Purpose, *The Assembly's Catechism*; therein divine Truths are collected from the Scrip-

(g) Rev. i. 20.

(b) Eph. vi. 4.

(i) Col. iv. 1.

(k) Philemon 2.

tures and confirmed by them. For my part, *I will thus publicly declare, that I look upon it as one of the very great Mercies of my Life, that I was early instructed in that Form of sound Words.* I love it; I read it; I study it still; and find that while I am instructing others in it I am taught myself. Instruct not only your Children, but *your Servants* also. O let not your Children or Servants have reason to say, My Father, my Master is a Professor, a Dissenter, (perhaps) a Church-Member; he attends on such a Minister, but he takes no care of us; he never, or hardly ever, saith any thing to us about our Souls; we have no Prayer, no Reading in our Family, except now and then, perhaps only the *Lord's-Day Evening*. My Brethren, if this may truly be said of any Professor, any Church-Member here present, let me seriously ask you, Will this defend and propagate the Truth? Did the primitive Christians, think you, act so? Did your Parents or Masters act so? Did the *Puritans* and Dissenters of the last Age thus neglect their Families? Not only the Children of the Family, but their Servants also have blessed God that they belonged to them, or came into their Houses, and will bless God to Eternity for it. As Christians you profess to be *Abraham's Seed*, but if you neglect Family Religion, you are not like the *Father of the Faithful*; this did not *Abraham*.

Abraham. I know him (saith GOD) (l) that he will command his Children, and Household after him, and they shall keep the Way of the Lord, &c. We may hope that the Truth will spread, and the Churches increase, if the LORD revive *Family Religion*, family Reading, family Prayer, family religious Instruction, and pious spiritual Talk in the Family. O LORD, pour down thy Spirit on the Families of thy People, and thy Churches will flourish!

(3) *It is the Duty of the Church of the living GOD to keep distinct from, and live above the World.*

THE Church of GOD, while *in* the World, (*m*) is not *of* the World. The Members of Churches, as Men engaged in lawful Callings, are to converse with the Men of the World, and are sometimes called to converse with those in whose Company they can have no Delight; when this is necessary, they are not out of the Way of their Duty, for if they were, then *must they* (*n*) *needs go out of the World*; but they are not to be (*o*) *conformed to the World in any thing sinful*: They are to think, speak and act, as Persons fearing GOD, who love his Gospel, and (*p*) *walk always before him with an evident Distinction from those who are* (*q*) *without GOD, and without CHRIST in the World*; not by affecting Singularity in

(l) Gen. xviii. 19.

(m) John xv. 19. xvii. 16.

(n) 1 Cor. v. 10.

(o) Rom. xii. 2.

(p) Gen. xvii. 1.

(q) Eph. ii. 12.

common and indifferent Things, those that are evidently so, and in no respect of ill Report. Surely a chearful Spirit, an easy and obliging Address, a courteous Temper and Conversation, these things, (where they can be attained) free from *French deceitful Ceremony*, are amiable; they are not unbecoming the Christian, but an Ornament to him and his Profession. But if any Dissenter, any Church-Member should call *immodest Dresses, mixt Dances in Balls and Assemblies, theatrical Entertainments, Masquerades, Card-playing, &c.* indifferent Things, and conform to the World in such Things themselves, or suffer (if they can possibly restrain them) their Children to do so, this would be Matter of great Lamentation. I believe he would have a very difficult Task who should undertake to prove, on Scripture Principles, that such professing Christians *(r)* walked worthy of their holy Vocation.

As the Members of Churches should be distinct from the World, so they should live above it: *(s)* being risen with Christ, they should seek the Things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right Hand of God; setting their Affections on Things above and not on Things on the Earth. Diligence in Business becomes the Christian, but eager Desires after, and Pursuit of worldly Riches, Honours and Pleasures, are unworthy the Christian Character, and

(r) Eph. iv. 1.

| (s) Col. iii. 1, 2.

where

where they are really predominant, inconsistent with true Religion. (t) *Love not the World, neither the Things which are in the World; if any Man love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him.* O how eager after the World are many who make a great Profession of Religion! it might be of great Service to such, carefully to read and pray over *Dr OWEN on the Grace and Duty of being spiritually minded.*—The Church of GOD, as a Church, is to be distinct from the World and live above it, particularly in an holy Care to keep the World as much as may be out of the Church; I mean, Men who are evidently of the World, or, who can and will give no Evidence but what they are so. All Tenderneſs in (u) the Meekneſs and Gentleneſs of Christ (w) (who will not break the bruised Reed, nor quench the ſmoking Flax) is to be uſed towards the weakeſt who deſire to join the Church, and give Evidence to a reaſonable, faithful and tender Charity, that they are born of God; but where Perſons expreſs no Conviction, or Knowledge of their loſt State as Sinners, or Acquaintance with CHRIST as the Saviour; the Church ſhould diſtinguiſh between the Precious and the Vile, and endeavour in the Exerciſe of the Government and Diſcipline of CHRIST'S Houſe to keep itſelf pure.—The Church, as a Church, ſhould live above the World, doing

(t) 1 John ii. 15.

(u) 2 Cor. x. 1.

(w) Iſa. xlii. 3.

nothing from a partial (y) Regard to the Rich and Great among them, *nor act (z) with worldly carnal Policy*, but doing all Things with *Simplicity, Openness and godly Sincerity*, shew that *Christ's (a) Kingdom is not of this World*: Which leads me to add,

(4) *THE Church, as the Church of the living God, is bound to submit to his Government, and to his only.*

WE have observed that the Church is the Seat of his gracious Government; this Government *is on the Shoulder of Christ*; as the mighty God in human Nature, he is capable to sustain the Weight of it. Obedience to him in all Things, every Christian, and every Christian-Church owes. *Though they are not under (b) the Law, as a Covenant, yet they are not (c) without Law to God, but under the Law to Christ*, and therefore under the powerful Influence of New-Covenant-Promises: They will (d) *through the Spirit mortify the Deeds of the Body*, and (e) *cleanse themselves from all Filthiness of the Flesh and Spirit, perfecting Holiness in the Fear of God*; (f) *as a chosen Generation, a royal Priesthood, an holy Nation, a peculiar People*, they will be concerned to shew forth the Praises of him who hath called them out of Darknes into his marvellous Light.

(y) James ii. 1.

(z) 2 Cor. i. 12.

(a) John xviii. 36.

(b) Rom. vi. 14.

(c) 1 Cor. ix. 21.

(d) Rom. viii. 13.

(e) 2 Cor. vii. 1.

(f) 1 Pet. ii. 9.

But

But I would particularly observe, that the Church of the living God is bound to acknowledge no Authority but CHRIST's in Matters of Faith, Order, Worship and Discipline. He, and he only, is the *Church's Head*: The Father hath set him, the Mediator, (g) *King in his holy Hill of Zion*. To this, as *Protestant Dissenters*, we desire to bear a constant practical Testimony. Do any ask, Why we are *Protestants* in Opposition to the detestable Principles, Spirit, Practices and tyrannical Usurpations of the Popish Synagogue? We answer, *Because we believe the Scriptures to be not meerly a sufficient, but the only Rule of Faith and Practice, and would act upon that Belief*. Do any enquire farther, Why we are *Protestant Dissenters*? Why we do not fall in with, and join the established and more general Worship of our Country? Our Answer in short is, *Because we can acknowledge Christ (b) only to be Lord in his own House. We can (i) call no Man, as to the Church, and in the Matters of our Religion, Master on Earth; One is our Master, even Christ*. We believe that he hath in his Word ordered all Things well; we are not only for receiving our Faith from Scripture, but also for ordering our Church-Constitution, Worship and Discipline, as near as we can (k) to Scripture Rule and Pattern. Our pious Predecessors,

(g) Psal. ii. 6.

(b) Heb. iii. 6.

(i) Matt. xxiii. 8—10.

(k) Deut. xii. 32.

(some

(some of us may say *Fathers*, and we reckon it our Honour to say so) *the Puritans* and *Non-conformists*, testified against human Inventions in the House and Worship of God: They believed, and therefore said, *That no Church hath Power to decree Rites and Ceremonies of religious Worship, or any Authority (properly so called) in Controversies of Faith.* We adhere to their Testimony, not *because it was their's* (though they had Comfort in it, amidst all their Sufferings for it in Life; and at Death, reflected on it with Pleasure) but because it is a *scriptural and noble Testimony.* We indeed freely own that we greatly respect their Memory and value their Writings: They were *just Men*, justified Persons, and Men of Piety and Integrity, true to their Principles, and lost and suffered not a little for their Integrity: *Their Memory* then is, and will be blessed. We also value *their Writings*; they were, several of them, Men of great spiritual Gifts and eminent Learning, and upon repeated perusal of their Writings, we know that *they (1) laid no other Foundation than that is laid (by God himself) even Jesus Christ*, and they built well on that Foundation. We submit to the civil Magistrate in *civil Matters*, and Reverence him when he is (as he ought to be) *(m) a Minister of God for good*; but in the *Matters of our God*, in the Churches, we have *no King but Jesus*, and I hope we shall

(1) 1 Cor. iii. 11, 12:

| (m) Rom. xiii. 4.

still (through Grace) say, *We will have no King but JESUS.* It is well known, that none are more firmly attached to the Person, Family and Government of our rightful Sovereign KING GEORGE, than the Protestant Dissenters: With loyal Hearts we daily pray for him and his Royal House: We bless God for him and his Government, for under it we enjoy great Quietness, and know by long Experience that our King is the *Father of his People*, the Guardian (under God) of our civil and religious Liberties. Are we Protestant Dissenters? We are so (and I wish it was more constantly remembered) not upon the Account of Doctrine, but *Church-Constitution and Worship.* The *Doctrinal Articles* of the Church of *England*, we approve of, as agreeable to Scripture: We, who are your Ministers, have testified this by *our Subscription to them*; we did it *honestly*, according to the true *genuine Intent* and Meaning of such Subscription, and should most heartily have rejoiced, if they had never been opposed, by any who have subscribed them, either in the Pulpit, or from the Press. It gives us very great Pleasure when we hear that the genuine Doctrine of the Church of *England* is preached by the Ministers in it; we (*n*) love them (as Brethren) in the Truth, and wish them good Speed in the Name of the LORD; while we yet do, and we hope shall *follow our Con-*

(e) 2 John i.

sciences enlightened (we trust) by the SPIRIT from the Word of God, and (o) stand fast in the Liberty with which Jesus Christ hath made us free.

The IMPROVEMENT.

(1) *How glorious is JEHOVAH as the Proprietor of, and graciously concerned in and with the Church?*

His Name, his Nature is in all Respects wonderful. The living God is exalted in his own Excellency; and (p) *all his Works do Praise him*, but (q) his Name is peculiarly great and glorious in *Israel*. The Glory (r) of God in the Face of Jesus Christ, shineth bright in the Church, and is seen by the Church. All the Perfections of God, are harmoniously displayed in his Covenant; in his CHRIST; (s) *the Angels look into those Things*; to them, (t) *to the Principalities and Powers in heavenly Places is known by the Church the manifold Wisdom of God*; to him therefore (u) *be Glory in the Church by Christ Jesus World without end. Amen.*

(2) *How honourable, how beautiful is a Christian Church of the living God!*

(o) Gal. v. 1.
(p) Psal. cxlv. 10.
(q) Psal. lxxvi. 1.
(r) 2 Cor. iv. 6.

(s) 1 Pet. i. 12.
(t) Eph. iii. 10.
(u) Eph. iii. 21.

THE Tabernacle and the Temple of old were honourable and beautiful *externally*. The Temple on Mount Zion was a most magnificent Structure, remarkable for its Glory and Beauty within and without; but its chief Honour and Glory consisted in its being the *House of God*, the Place *where he recorded his Name*, and met with his People. They beheld his Power and Glory there: And the Church of the living God is honourable and beautiful now on the same Account. The Church is the LORD's, his living Temple, and he is present in it. I hope there are those of us, who know this, and esteem our Relation and Standing in the Church of the living God, however despised by the World, as our Honour and Happiness. His People that we are united with, and the Ordinances of his Worship are precious to us. What a Pity is it that any who are vitally *united to the LORD should not be fully joined to the Church?* But how vain will a meer external Relation to the Church of God be found, when the living God himself was never truly known? Those who are *(w)* of Israel, *while they are not Israel*, are not acknowledged by Israel's King; now they taste not of the *(x)* Goodness of his House, his holy Temple here, and will be openly rejected by CHRIST the King, in the Day of his glorious Appearance.

(w) Rom. ix. 6.

| (x) Psal. lxxv. 4.

K

(3) How

(3) How earnestly should all who love the living GOD pray for the Peace of his Churches!

PRAY (y) for the Peace of Jerusalem; that the Churches, all the Churches may appear more and more to be the LORD's, and his Glory be seen and known in them, and his Blessing be on his Word and Ordinances. The Churches in our Land have (z) Rest; may they be edified, and walking in the Fear of the Lord, and the Comforts of the Holy Ghost, be multiplied. We should pray for the HOLY SPIRIT, and every Believer should (a) walk in him continually. May we be sensible of the Necessity of his Presence in the Church in order to spiritual Comfort and Prosperity! We live in Gospel Times, under the last, and the best Dispensation of the Covenant, but alas! it is most evident, that Believers in particular, and that Churches in general have (b) left their first Love. May the LORD make all sensible of their Backslidings, and heal them! *It is a (c) Day of small Things*, and yet the LORD doth not despise it. *He can (d) revive his Work*, and we hope he will. We have many great and precious Promises for Faith to embrace and be encouraged by, in praying for the HOLY SPIRIT, that glorious Healer and Restorer. Let all the Churches then pray for each other, that the

(y) Psal. cxxii. 6.

(z) Acts ix. 31.

(a) Gal. v. 16.

(b) Rev. ii. 4.

(c) Zech. iv. 10.

(d) Hab. ii. 2.

LORD

LORD by his SPIRIT may dwell in them and walk among them. " Gospel Churches, " (saith a late eminent (e) Minister, well " known to many of you) should watch " unto Prayer, not barely for themselves, " but for all *Sister Churches*. That is, they " should pray for) a New-Testament Effu- " sion of the ever-blessed Spirit : For *as* he " is poured forth, *so* Churches thrive ; and " as he is withheld, they decay. It is to " the full as impossible, by any Ways or " Means, to prevent the Growth of grey " Hairs in Gospel-Churches without the " Spirit, as it is by artificial Lights and " Fires to prevent the Return either of the " Night, or of the Winter, without the Sun." Be much in Prayer for the Pastors and Ministers of the Churches. Church-Prosperity is not a little connected with the LORD's Presence with them in private, as well as in public. Our Request (who are Ministers) to you is (e) *Brethren pray for us* ; it is a Request we make with Seriousness and Earnestness : We hope we can sincerely adopt the Language of the Apostle Paul, Now (f) *we beseech you Brethren for the Lord Jesus Christ's Sake, and for the Love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with us in your Prayers to God for us.* Do not deny our Request, we pray with and for you.

(e) *Bragge* on Church
Discipline, Page 127.

(e) 1 Theff. v. 25.

(f) Rom. xv. 30.

A FEW Words particularly to *the Members of the Church* *statedly assembling in this Place*, and I have done. My *Christian Friends*, your aged and venerable Pastor hath long gone in and out before you; *he has fed you (g) according to the Integrity of his Heart* (with sound Doctrine, *the (h) Doctrine which is according to Godliness*) and guided you with the *Skilfulness of his Hands*. God yet spares him to you: You still see his Face, and hear his Voice; daily pray for him, that God *(i) who hath taught him from his Youth, so that hitherto he hath declared his wondrous Works, may not forsake him*, but greatly support, comfort, and bless him in his own Soul, and bless his *Ministrations*, now he is old and grey-headed; and that when *(k) his Flesh and Heart faileth*, the living God may be the *Strength of his Heart, and his Portion for ever*. And you now see our dear Brother, your younger Pastor. His *Ministrations* in Time past you have *occasionally* enjoyed, but now they are, they will be *statedly* yours. I am persuaded you do, and will pray that the LORD the SPIRIT may greatly own them to you, and to many who shall attend with you. You have been faithfully instructed in the Gospel of the Grace of God by your aged Pastor, as also by our Brother* who hath been with him labouring

(g) Psal. lxxviii. 72.

(h) 1 Tim. vi. 3.

* The Reverend Mr Pitts.

(i) Psal. lxxi. 17, 18.

(k) Psal. lxxiii. 26.

in the Word and Doctrine among you ; and you have reason to believe (bless God for it) that our Brother, who hath been now separated to the Co-pastorship with your aged Pastor, will (*through (l) the Supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ*) adhere to that good Confession he hath now made, and preach *not (m) another Gospel*, but that which you have learned and been assured of the Truth of. *May he come to you and be long continued among you, in (n) the Fulness of the Blessing of the Gospel of Christ!* And now I leave with you the apostolical Exhortations, which you may find, *Col. ii. 6, 7. 1 Thess. v. 12, 13.* and let me entreat you to read them often. *As ye have therefore received Jesus Christ the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the Faith as ye have been taught, abounding therein with Thanksgiving. We beseech you, Brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you ; and esteem them very highly in Love for their Works sake, and be at Peace among yourselves.* Amen.

(l) Phil. i. 19.

(m) Gal. i. 6.

(n) Rom. xv. 29.

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1. The first part of the paper is devoted to a review of the literature on the effects of the 1997-1998 Asian financial crisis on the economies of the Asian countries. The second part of the paper is devoted to a review of the literature on the effects of the 1997-1998 Asian financial crisis on the economies of the Asian countries. The third part of the paper is devoted to a review of the literature on the effects of the 1997-1998 Asian financial crisis on the economies of the Asian countries.



T H E E X H O R T A T I O N .

WITH great Seriousness and Satisfaction, *Brother*, we have attended to the solemn Transactions of this Day. We have heard *the Openings of Providence* in bringing you amongst this People, and in *uniting their Choice of you*, to be *their Pastor*; to be joined with our aged and venerable Father, in the Oversight of this Church of the living God. This weighty Charge you have now undertaken, and have been witnessing a good *Confession*; and have thereby evidenced your Knowledge in (a) *the Mystery of CHRIST*; have evidenced that you know the Gospel, and love it; that you believe its sacred Contents, both in their Truth and Importance. May the (b) *Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and of Israel our Fathers, keep these Things for ever in the Imagination of the Thoughts of your Heart!*

THE Office before you is what the holy Oracles every where represent in the most weighty and momentous Points of View. It is a Charge, a Trust, a Stewardship, a Commis-

(a) Eph. iii. 4.

| (b) 1 Chron. xxix. 18.

sion to speak and act for God, and from him; a sacred *Embassy*, an holy *Warfare*, which require great Skill, Resolution and Faithfulness in their due Discharge. So great, that who indeed is sufficient for these Things! But *He*, who gives us the Commission, hath also given us the Assurance, that *His Grace* (c) is sufficient for us. That (d) as our Days, so shall our Strength be: And (e) that he is with us always even to the End of the World. And having such Promises, we faint not.

I ADMIRE the Expressiveness of the original Language in Numbers iii. 3. *These are the Names of the Sons of Aaron the Priests, who were anointed; whom he consecrated, (literally you know it is) whose Hands he filled, to minister in the Priest's Office.* Those whom God calls and consecrates to his Service in the Gospel of his SON, have their Hands full of Business, and had need be industrious in their Lord and Master's Work: There is no room to be slothful, the Business is too extensive; no room to be light and trifling, it is too solemn and urgent: The Glory of the great *JEHOVAH*, the Salvation of immortal Souls, the Prosperity of the Church, and the giving up our Account at last with Joy, are all Considerations of such a Nature, as tend to make the wise and faithful Servant bestir himself in the Undertaking: And need there

(c) 2 Cor. xii. 9.

(d) Deut. iii. 25.

(e) Matt. xxviii. 20.

The Prophet that hath a Dream, let him tell a Dream; and he that hath my Word, let him speak my Word faithfully: What is the Chaff to the Wheat? saith the Lord.

WORDS of an exceeding solemn and commanding sound! they contain both a Reprimand and a Charge: A sharp and awful Reprimand to the *false* Prophets; and a majestic striking Charge to the *true*. The Times wherein this holy and faithful Prophet lived, were too much like our own; a Day wherein the Church was over-run with false Teachers; with meer Pretenders to the sacred Embassy of Heaven. As the God of Truth was pleased often to reveal his Will to his Servants by Dreams and Visions of the Night, so the Father of Lies set his Votaries on dreaming also. These were

L Men

Men of corrupt Minds, who daringly confronted the lively Oracles of Heaven with their Dreams of Falshood, and Visions of their own Hearts; by which Means, God's awful Messages to the People from the Lips of his own Servants, were discredited and lightly esteemed. Sad Times, when the Friends of Truth are out-numbered by the Teachers of Error, and God's People are tempted to forget his Name, by the Dreams which these are telling, every Man to his (f) Neighbour.

IN this Connection stand the Words we have now read. *The Prophet that hath a Dream, let him tell a Dream, &c.* that is, "Let him consider it, and speak of it but as a Dream, as the Product of his own Fancy and Imagination, and not palm it upon the People as the Truth of God." Or rather, "Let such false Dreamers, such bold Imaginers know, it is at their Peril that they prophesy Lies in the Name of the Lord:" *For behold, I am against them that prophesy false Dreams, saith the Lord, and do tell them, and cause my People to err by their Lies and their Lightness (g).*

SUCH is the Commination and Repri- mand in the Words. But on the other Hand, here is a Charge given to his own Servants. *He that hath my Word, let him speak my Word faithfully.* Here observe, God's

(f) Jer. xxiii. 27.

| (g) Ver. 25—32.

Word is opposed to Men's *Dreams*; his *Truths*, to their *Falshoods*; his *Work* and Service to their light and ill *Practices*.

The Term דָּבָר [*dabar*] signifies not merely a *Word* that is spoken, but also any *Work* or Business, that is performed; and so, may with Propriety be extended to the whole of that *Work* or Office, which God calls any of his Servants unto, in his Church: Whatever others do, and whatever Opposition his Servants meet with, they are to mind their Business closely, to discharge their Trust faithfully, and to serve their Lord and Master sincerely; *for what is the Chaff to the Wheat, saith the Lord?*—This being the obvious Meaning and Spirit of the Text, I proceed to apply it a little to the present Occasion. I cannot indeed but adopt *Elibu's* Remark, *I said, Days should speak and the multitude of Years should teach Wisdom* (b). However, Sir, as your *Standing* or *Proficiency* in the ministerial Character greatly disqualify me for being your *Instructor*; so they render it unnecessary that much of this kind should be attempted: I therefore only intreat your Patience, while, as a *Remembrancer* to myself and you, I briefly enumerate the most material Branches of that weighty Employment you are now called to of God; for the Sake of suggesting a few Remarks which have appeared to me of considerable Use in the right Dis-

(b) Job xxxii. 7.

charge of this most important Trust ; upon which I would willingly add a few brief Hints for your Encouragement, amidst all the Difficulties which attend it.

IN this intended Enumeration, the first Thing which strikes our Attention is, *The Business of public Teaching*. A leading Branch of the *pastoral Office*, consists in preaching the Gospel ; *preach (i) the Word*. *He that hath my Word, let him speak, &c.* Pastors are public Teachers ; Teachers qualified and sent of God ; they bear CHRIST'S Commission, and have the Promise of his Presence and Blessing, *Lo, I am with you always, &c.*—The Ends designed by this divine Institution of a Gospel Ministry, are exceeding interesting and momentous. It is a speaking unto Men *Words whereby they must be saved*, and whereby the Saints are nourished up unto eternal Life. *For after that in the Wisdom of God the World by Wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the Foolishness of Preaching to save them that believe (i).*—A Business therefore which requires the greatest Wisdom, Industry and Address ; to fail here, is to be capitally deficient. It is to be wanting in an Article which is most essential to a Person's Acceptation and Usefulness in the pastoral Office: Wherefore, *Brother*, continue to use great Pains and Application herein. And in its faithful Discharge, three Things present themselves as

(b) 2 Tim. iv. 2.

|

(i) 1 Cor. i. 21.

distinct Objects of the Preacher's Attention, viz.—Doctrinal Instruction.—A Defence of the Truth against Opposition.—And then, a close and skilful Application of these Truths to the Minds and Consciences of his Hearers.

First, THERE must be *an holding forth doctrinally the blessed Truths of the Gospel*. And here we have the whole of GOD's revealed Will for our Directory and Guide; this contains all our Instructions (and it becomes Ambassadors to keep entirely to the instructions of their Prince.) Nothing is to be urged on our People as to Faith, Worship, or Walk, but what is contained *expresly*, or by *just Consequence*, in the sacred Oracles. It is sad to incur the divine Censure of *teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men* (k). On the other Hand, the *whole* of GOD's Word is to be faithfully dispensed; *we are not to shun declaring the whole Counsel of God* (l). To suppress and keep back any Part of the revealed Will of GOD, is to act the Part of an unfaithful Steward of these divine Mysteries. I do not know any greater Affront can be put upon the Wisdom of GOD, than for Men to take upon them to judge, that this, and the other Doctrine, is too *deep*, or too mysterious, or on some Account or other *unfit* to be brought into the Pulpit; for this

(k) Matt. xv. 9.

| (l) Acts xx. 27.

is to set up *Man's Wisdom* before the *Lord's*, and to rob his Children of a Part of that spiritual Provision their heavenly Father hath made for their Nourishment and Support. Whatever Truths we find in our Bible, whether they respect Doctrines or Duties, Faith or Practice, we may warrantably bring them forth in the Course of our Public Ministry, as *God's Ordinance for Good; for all Scripture is given by Inspiration of God, and is profitable for Doctrine, &c (n). He that bath my Word, let him speak my Word faithfully, &c.*

I NEED not urge you, dear Sir, to a diligent Study of the Scriptures, or to a making use of your Knowledge of the Original Languages; these are highly proper to be attended to, not out of Vanity and Ostentation, but for the Sake of learning with Exactness the *Mind of the SPIRIT* in the Texts we handle.—Less need is there to direct your Pursuit of a clear and comprehensive Idea of the whole System of revealed Truths; or to remind you, there is such a Thing as the *Analogy of Faith (o)*; that there is a beautiful Connection, Harmony and Dependence in all the Parts of holy Writ, which it is the Business of the evangelical Preacher clearly to state and fully evince.

So likewise as to the *Manner* of Instruction; Little Call is there to guard you against the *empty Pomp of Language*, which some have

(n) 2 Tim. iii. 16.

| (o) Rom. xii. 6.

affected.

affected. These trifling Sallies of Youth are sufficiently ridiculous to your riper Years and Judgment. Such Preachers may possibly please themselves; it is much if they profit their People; for this is a Vanity which the SPIRIT of the LORD will blow upon and make to wither (p). *What is the Chaff to the Wheat? &c.* But indulge me, Sir, in the mention of one Caution which hath sometimes been the Temptation of elder Years; and that is, — Do not affect a Singularity in your Terms and Expressions; or a mystical, dark, involved Diction, or any thing else that bespeaks a Fondness for a Path of your own, in your Doctrinal Representations of the Truth as it is in Jesus. Such a Conduct may amuse some, and will stumble and grieve others; while it does not appear to be God's Ordinance for the Edification of any. Weak People indeed sometimes mistake these Things for deep Preaching; and the Itch of being thought the deep Divine seems to be the main, if not the only Lure! But they that indulge this Temper have generally fallen into the Snare of the Devil, that is, the Pride of Knowledge, of superior Knowledge to others; by which means good Men, have greatly grieved the holy SPIRIT of God, and brought down upon their Ministry a Blast, instead of a Blessing. But let all that love the Truth make it manifest with all Plainness of Speech, and

(p) Isai. xl. 24.

thereby commend themselves to every Man's Conscience in the Sight of God (q).

Secondly, Our farther Business in the Course of public Preaching is, to endeavour the Defence of the Truth against Opposers. From the Beginning the blessed Gospel has met with great Opposition, and the Truth cannot be maintained without much Contention and Conflict. The fashionable *Sibboleth* indeed is *Charity* and *Moderation*; that is, in other Words, free Quarter to the most dangerous Errors, and a cold Indifference to the most important Truths. With such the grand Doctrines of the Reformation and of the Bible may be traduced, as antiquated and obsolete Opinions; but certain I am, the Apostle *Jude* was in very different Sentiments, when he exhorted us *earnestly to contend for the Faith which was once delivered to the Saints* (r). Zeal as well as Charity enters into the Composition of that Temper which is truly Christian; they are kindred Graces; Fruits of the same Spirit, and dwell in the same renewed Heart.

As to the Management of Religious Controversies, if you, *Brother*, was younger, or I a little older it might become me to add by way of Advice, what I would make Conscience of attending to as the Rule of my own Conduct, namely, *To weigh well the Im-*

(q) 2 Cor. iv. 2.

(r) Jude 3.

portance of controverted Points, and to employ a Measure of zealous Care and Pains in Defence of every Truth in Proportion to its real Influence on the Christian's Faith, Holiness or Comfort. For which Reason, the greatest Difference should be always made between such Matters as are controverted amongst real Christians, and those Contentions which we have with the notorious Opposers or Abusers of the Gospel. In the former Case, we cannot easily exceed in Meekness, Forbearance, Condescension and brotherly Love: In the latter, we are directed to rebuke them sharply, that they may be found in the Faith (s).—Yet should we ever remember, that the Wrath of Man worketh not the Righteousness of God (t). Great Care ought to be taken that we mix not our own sinful Passions and Spirits in religious Debates. The Cause of Truth needs no such Weapons, as Wrath, Bitterness, Slander, Invective, or personal Reflections to support it. The Rule is plain: The Servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all Men; apt to teach, patient, in Meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them Repentance to the acknowledging the Truth (u). Once more,

Thirdly, ANOTHER Part of this weighty Business is, to make close and skilful Application

(s) Tit. i. 13.

(t) James i. 20.

(u) 2 Tim. ii. 24.

of the Doctrines taught, to the Minds and Consciences, the Hearts and Affections of the Hearers. We are to aim *at the Heart* in all our Ministrations. How well soever we inform the Judgment, if there is not also something tending to warm and raise the Affections to GOD, we leave our Audience cold and careless. It is our Duty to aim at animating and enforcing the sacred Message with all proper Life and Spirit of Address. This is an Ordinance of GOD for Good. Infinite Wisdom has ordained a *living* Ministry as the stated Means of converting, sanctifying and saving immortal Souls : Hence all the most natural and familiar Modes of Persuasion are to be met with in the Scripture itself : And these, in all Ages, have been owned and blessed by the LORD the SPIRIT, to answer the Designs of his Mercy and Grace. It is an unhappy and hurtful Notion which some have given into, " That a naked Declaration of the Truth is " the whole of ministerial Work ; that no- " thing is to be urged and pressed upon " the Conscience, as a Means of Life, which " is above the Powers of our fallen depraved " Nature of itself to perform ; and that " every Thing which contains an earnest " and close Address to the Sinner's Con- " science is inconsistent with the Truth and " Spirit of the Gospel." Whereas it is evident from Scripture, Experience, and common Sense, that these Things are the exter-

nal and fit Means, which the HOLY SPIRIT has *instituted* and *ordained*; and by which he works, in beginning, carrying on, and perfecting the Sanctification and Salvation of God's Elect.

GOD could have quickened the *dry bones*, without *Ezekiel's* prophesying upon them (*w*); and have caused the Sea to cast the Shoal of Fish on the Shore, without *Simon's* casting the Net; but *Ezekiel* was commanded to prophesy, and *Peter* to cast the Net (*x*), as the Means ordained for producing these Effects: And no Man can despise the Ordinance of GOD without incurring his Displeasure.

It is to be indeed owned and lamented, that too many *daub with untempered Morter* (*y*); and even pious and judicious Divines may sometimes have used exceptionable Phrases, in this Part of their Work; yet it betrays the greatest *Weakness*, to make Men capital *Offenders for a Word*; and something *much worse*, to traduce their excellent Labours *in the Whole*, as *tending to lead us devoutly to Hell*; when the Tenor and Spirit of their several Writings is manifestly to fix us on the Rock of Ages. — But our Business, *Brother*, is to follow the Scripture *wholly* and *fully*: A *scriptural-way* of Preaching is always warrantable, and we may hope to find it useful. We must persevere in following the sacred

(*w*) Ezekiel xxxvii. 4.

(*y*) Ezekiel xiii. 10.

(*x*) Luke v. 5.

Pattern, notwithstanding all the Cavils of Weakness or Design; the Ox was not muzzled when treading out the Corn (z); nor should a Minister *be cramped* in dispensing the Word. *He that bath my Word, let him speak my Word faithfully: What is the Chaff to the Wheat? saith the Lord.*

THUS, Sir, you have my free Thoughts upon this material and leading Branch of your Office, that is, dispensing the Word. And if our Time permitted, we should proceed distinctly to consider, the other special Duties of your sacred Function; such as Public Prayer and Praise; the Administration of the two New-Testament Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper; the Training up the Youth of the Congregation in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord; as well as a going before the Church in the Exercise of all that spiritual Rule and good Discipline, which is necessary to the Edification of the Body of CHRIST, and the Honor and Furtherance of the Gospel. Concerning all which I must content myself, with the following brief Remarks. As,

I. THEY are all of them *solemn Ordinances of God*; and therefore the *greatest Solemnity of Spirit* is requisite to their Ministration. They are designed to *instruct*, but not *meerly* so; they are adapted also to *affect*, to raise, and engage the warmer Powers of the Soul in

(z) Deut. xxv. 4.

true Devotion, and dedication to God and his Fear.—Give vent therefore to your own religious Affections, and aim through the divine Blessing, to invigorate the Hearts of your Fellow-Worshippers. Ever bear it in Mind, *Sir*, that your Knowledge and Experience, your Labour and Skill, and even your religious Affections, are what God *hath taken up for his Use* in the Instruction, Consolation and Salvation of this People, over whom he has now placed you.

2. I cannot forbear expressly recommending the *important Duty of Catechizing*, and otherways instructing the younger Part of your Flock. The Rule is plain, *Train up a Child in the Way he should go, and when he is Old he will not depart from it* (a).—Let me intreat you to take some Pains herein; it will, through the SPIRIT and blessing of God, turn to good Account. I am persuaded, the numerous Instances we have in the rising Generation, of a Defection, and turning wholly aside from the religious Sentiments and Profession of their Fathers, have been greatly owing to the criminal Neglect of their Parents and Ministers in this Part of their bounden Duty: And having been nursed up in Ignorance, Lightness, and a Neglect of sacred Instruction, they have become an easy Prey to the Pageantries of Error and Superstition. With respect to *us Ministers* in par-

(a) Prov. xxii. 6.

ticular; if we shew no Love to them, and take no Pains with them in their *younger Years*, how can we expect *afterwards* to be valued and adhered to by them; whereas, a due Discharge of this Office of Love towards them, has the greatest Tendency to endear us to them, and them to us; as well as to fortify their Minds by sound Knowledge, against the cunning Craftiness of those that lie in wait to deceive. Once more,

3. As to the *proper Order, Government and Discipline in the Church*, it is highly incumbent on *Pastors and Elders* to see to these Things. The Excellency and Interest of every Society depend much upon the Goodness of their Rules, but more on their close Adherence to them. In this Case the Rules and Orders are sacred and divine, they are the wise Institutes of the LORD of Glory; and it is the Glory of the Churches, faithfully and conscientiously to abide in the Practice of them. The Peace, Purity, Prosperity and Increase of a Christian Community are more intimately connected herewith than many are aware of.—Not that Ministers are to *lord it* over God's Heritage; Despotism and Anarchy, are alike destructive to the Interests of real Religion. Remarkable is the Manner in which the Apostle expresses himself upon this Subject, *1 Tim. iii. 5. If a Man know not how to rule his own House, how shall he take Care*

*Care of the Church of God? ** Observe, he varies the Phrase, to intimate that Pastors have not the same Authority over the Church, which they have over their own Houses; the one is *magisterial*, the other only *ministerial*; over *that* a Sovereignty, over *this* a tender, active Care, is what we are to exercise. “ It is our great Work (says the judicious “ Dr Owen) in what Interest CHRIST hath “ given us in the Rule of the Church, to “ represent him as spiritual, holy, meek “ and forbearing, and his Government as “ every Way tending to Edification, and not “ Destruction.” *Take heed therefore unto yourself, and to all the Flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you Overseer, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own Blood (b).*

THIS leads me also to observe, that besides these your *public Services*, your farther Business is also tenderly to *watch over your Flock* as a faithful Shepherd, and to study the Good of it in all Things. Much of a Pastor's Duty lieth *out of the Pulpit*. *Be diligent to know the State of thy Flock, and set thy Heart upon thy Herds (c).* It concerns us to acquaint ourselves well with the spiritual Conditions of our Hearers. A Minister who lives an utter Stranger to his People, is seldom of any considerable Service among them. If we would be useful to their Souls, we must

(b) Acts xx. 28.

| (c) Prov. xxvii. 23.

* περιεργημι επιμελησομαι.

follow our Sermons into their Families, must give them our Company and free Converse; this is the Way both to be profitable to them, and profited by them:—The Sick and Afflicted are entitled to our most tender and special Regards: The Sick and Wounded in Spirit, are yet more so, nor should we ever think much at the Hours we spend in attending sick Beds, or wounded Spirits. It is our Duty, carefully to notice and encourage the first Stirrings of Convictions and religious Concern in the Heart; to strengthen the weak Hands, and confirm the feeble Knees, &c (d). Christian Visits are as necessary and useful in their Place, as close Study, and public Work. Only let there be Care taken, that they are truly Christian; for much precious Time may be wasted upon light and trivial Matters, which are far from being so. Pastoral Visits should be serious, short, frequent, spiritual, faithful, and affectionate. Let it appear in them all, that you yourself remember what you have taught them in Public, and that you was in earnest for their Soul's Good in what you delivered.—There is the greatest Difference between a Man's fishing for Applause, and an humble spiritual Solicitude to know the Success of his Labours, for what is the Chaff to the Wheat? saith the Lord.

In fine, your Business, dear Sir, is also to be (as much as in you lies) an Example to

(d) Isa. xxxv. 3.

the

the Flock in all Things. Aim, in a constant Dependence upon the SPIRIT of Grace, to *live the Truths* you preach, to exemplify the Duties you would enforce: The Humility, Meekness, Patience, Uprightness; the Faith, Love, Zeal, and Spirituality of Heart, Lip and Life, you would recommend.—But instead of farther Enlargement, I will close this whole Representation by repeating the Sentiments of the forementioned judicious and eminent Divine *.”

“ It is undoubtedly incumbent upon us
 “ who are called to the Ministry, so to be-
 “ have ourselves that we may be a real Gift
 “ of CHRIST to the Church, and be owned
 “ by them to be such. I do not know for
 “ my own Part a more affecting Thought
 “ a Minister can have than this: How shall
 “ I approve myself so, as to be looked upon
 “ to be a Gift from CHRIST to the Church
 “ he has placed me over? There are three
 “ Things which more especially render a
 “ Minister such to a People.—An Imitation
 “ of CHRIST.—A Representation of CHRIST.
 “ —And a Zeal for CHRIST.

1st, “ AN Imitation of CHRIST, as the
 “ great Shepherd of the Sheep, in Meekness,
 “ in Love, in Tenderness and Care for the
 “ whole. So CHRIST is described, *He shall*
 “ *feed his Flock like a Shepherd, he shall gather*

* See Dr Owen's Thirteen Sermons, lately Published, from Sir John Hartopp's MSS. 12mo. Pag. 62.

“ *the Lambs in his Arms (e), &c.* Here is the
 “ great Pattern for all his under Shepherds.—
 “ 2dly, THERE is a Representation of
 “ CHRIST, and that in all his Offices; a
 “ Representation of him, in the Rule and
 “ Government of the Church: So to rule,
 “ that the Church under our Care may be
 “ sensible that CHRIST’s Government is spi-
 “ ritual and holy. What a woful Represen-
 “ tation hereof is made by Men who rule
 “ the Church of GOD with Rods and Axes,
 “ with Fire and Faggot! Is this to represent
 “ the meek, the tender, the holy Jesus, as
 “ King of the Church? No, rather to re-
 “ present a cruel devouring Tyrant of the
 “ World.—To represent CHRIST in his pro-
 “ phetic Office: He was the great Teacher
 “ of the Church, and the principal Work of
 “ of a Minister is to preach the Word, and
 “ by all Means to carry on the Saints in the
 “ Knowledge of GOD, and of our LORD and
 “ Saviour JESUS CHRIST. Those who take
 “ upon them to be Pastors, and neglect this
 “ Work of feeding the Flock, may at as
 “ cheap a Rate, and with equal Modesty,
 “ utterly renounce JESUS CHRIST and the
 “ Gospel.—Farther, CHRIST is to be repre-
 “ sented by Ministers in the imitable Part of
 “ his Sacerdotal Office, which is to make
 “ continual Prayer and Intercession for the

(e) Isa. xl. 11.

“ Church,

“ Church, and for that Church in particu-
 “ lar whereunto we belong.

3dly, “ THERE is also a Zeal for CHRIST.

“ He that comes as an Ambassador from
 “ CHRIST and in his Stead, ought to have a
 “ fervent Zeal for all the Concerns, and the
 “ Glory of his LORD, in the Church: For
 “ his Worship, the Purity of his Ord-
 “ nances, the Maintenance of his Autho-
 “ rity, the Conversion of Sinners, and the
 “ Building up of the Saints. It is a great
 “ Work thus in all Things to be Represen-
 “ tatives of our LORD and HEAD; and in-
 “ deed, who is sufficient for these Things!

AND now, *Brother*, you see what the Bu-
 finess is which you have undertaken from the
 Lord! I know you have an affecting Sense of
 its Weight, and the Difficulties which attend
 it, and therefore undertake it with much
 Timorousness and Fear; and it is good al-
 ways to fear, in opposition to a light and
 self-sufficient and vain-glorious Spirit; than
 which I know nothing that is more unprom-
 ising and ill-boading. *Be not high-minded,*
but fear. It becomes us to be often review-
 ing the Greatness and Difficulties of our
 Charge, that we may have a lively Sense of
 our own Insufficiency for it; yet is there no
 room to be disheartned and dismayed; as it
 is Great and Arduous, so it is Honourable
 and Delightful, to those whose Hearts the

(f) Rom. xi. 20.

LORD hath prepared unto himself: it is a delightful Business to be employed and succeeded in the Gospel of his Son. Many Difficulties and Trials indeed are to be expected, yet with *David*, (g) *encourage yourself in God.* To this End always bear in Mind,

First, THERE is no Room to be discouraged in your Work, for you are spending your Time and Strength in the best of Business: The Instruction and Salvation of precious immortal Souls, is a Service which of all others most highly deserves all your Cares and Pains; never be weary of this Employment. If we are made instrumental in *plucking but one Brand out of the Burning*; of delivering but one unhappy Sinner from the Jaws of Death and Ruin, it is well worth a whole long Life of Labour and Toil; And if we obtain Mercy of the LORD to be faithful, there is Hope (says pious Mr. Henry) that we may obtain this farther Mercy of him, to be useful.

Secondly, THERE is no room to be dispirited and dismayed, for you serve the best of Masters, even JESUS CHRIST our exalted LORD and KING; who hath his Eyes full of Care, his Heart full of Compassion, and his Hands full of Supplies for his active faithful Servants. His Grace is sufficient for you amidst

(g) 1 Sam. xxx. vi.

all the Toils and Heat of the Day. While with Humility, Dependence and Fear, we are doing his Business and designing his Glory, though attended with numerous Imperfections and Short-comings, he hath an Heart full of Love, ready to forgive and to pass by all our Failings and Defects: Our great Mercy is, we are *not under the Law, but under Grace*; the Rule is perfect, and Perfection is to be our *Aim*, yet is it not the *Term* of our Acceptance with Him; while we have this Body of Sin and Death, we *cannot do the Things that we would (b)*; but *there is Forgiveness with him that he may be feared (i)*.

Thirdly, You are employed in a Work wherein your Lord and Master is working with you. It is his Gospel you are Preaching, his Ordinances you are Administring, his Kingdom you are Advancing, and his Church you are Building up: And he will put an Honor upon his own Institutes, and clothe his Gospel with a Power. If CHRIST hath sent us, he will be with us, and his Word in our Mouths shall not return wholly void and fruitless. A Consideration vastly encouraging! We may chearfully cast the Net at the Saviour's bidding, and expect the Blessing, when He hath commanded it. Be sure, Brother, always earnestly bespeak his blessed Company and Presence with you, in all your

(b) Gal. v. 17.

| (i) Psal. cxxx. 4.

Ministrations Without me ye can do nothing; but, Lo, I am with you always, even to the End of the World.

Fourthly, You are called to labour and act not in your own Name and Strength, but in his who hath sent you into his Vineyard; Ministers are called to act for CHRIST and from Him, by Strength derived from Him, who is the Fountain of Israel; a full Fountain, in whom are all our Springs. Would you go on cheerfully and pleasantly in your Work, and be successful in it? Walk in Christ, live upon him, and live to him (k); endeavour yet more and more after Communion and close Walking with God, as a Christian; that is the best the only Recipe against Low-spiritedness and Soul-discouragements in your Work. Let not the Minister and the Scholar starve the Christian; while you keep the Vineyards of others, neglect not your own. Our heaviest Hours, and most desponding Frames, often spring from a too great Neglect of Closet Duties, and an indulged Distance from God. You will ever find it the best Way to get rid of Heart-heaviness and Glooms, is to give yourself afresh to Meditation and Prayer. Read the Scriptures often, as God's Ordinance against both Barrenness and Darkness of Frames.

Fifthly, BE not discouraged, seeing we have infallible Assurance, That our Labour shall not

(k) Colos. ii. 6.

be in vain in the Lord (l). It is a Business which shall certainly turn to good Account in the End. You, Sir, may warrantably have Respect, as Moses had, unto the Recompence of the Reward (m): We have nothing to expect from GOD by way of Merit, but much is to be expected in a way of free Grace and free Promise; for faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it (n).

WHEREFORE, my Reverend and Dear Brother, *Gird up the Loins of your Mind, be sober, and hope to the End, for the Grace that is to be brought unto you at the Revelation of Jesus Christ (o). Preach the Word; be instant in Season, out of Season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all Long-suffering and Doctrine. Watch thou in all Things, endure Afflictions, do the Work of an Evangelist, make full Proof of thy Ministry (p). Thus will you at last close the Scene with Joy, and spend your dying Breath in holy Triumph. I have fought a good Fight, I have finished my Course, I have kept the Faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that Day: And not to me only, but to all them also that love his appearing. To his Grace I commend you.*

THE LORD be with you! *Amen.*

(l) 1 Cor. xv. 58.

(m) Heb. xi. 26.

(n) 1 Theff. v. 24.

(o) 1 Pet. i. 13.

(p) 2 Tim. iv. 2, 5, 7.



F. I. N. I. S.

